



Walter James Shepherd



HINTS
FOR
PICTURESQUE IMPROVEMENTS
IN
ORNAMENTED COTTAGES,
&c. &c.



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Plate 1.



E. B. Id.

HINTS

FOR

PICTURESQUE IMPROVEMENTS

IN

ORNAMENTED COTTAGES,

AND THEIR SCENERY :

INCLUDING SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE LABOURER
AND HIS COTTAGE.

IN THREE ESSAYS.

Illustrated by Sketches.

“ Modicus voti, presso lare, dulcis amicis.”

PERSIUS.

BY

EDMUND BARTELL, JUN.

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P R E F A C E.

Few researches of late years have more occupied the attention of persons of taste, than those which relate to Picturesque Scenery: a line of study that is greatly indebted to the assiduous investigations and accurate definitions of a few ingenious authors, for the just ideas of taste which their remarks have tended to produce in the minds of the lovers of Nature.

The mere lover of Nature, although unaided by observations found-

ed on correct principles, is nevertheless not insensible to her beauties, either pleasing, picturesque or sublime. He contemplates with delight the far-extended prospect melting into air, is cherished by the beauties of a setting sun, and admires its magic influence upon various objects; but is incapable of turning his observations to advantage in works of taste.

The love of a country life seems to be innate in the human breast: man seeks the large and populous city from necessity; but when he is fortunately enabled to pursue his own inclinations, he generally dedicates some part of the year to a rural retreat.

Horace.

Horace, with as much strength as pleasantry, says,

“ Naturam expelles furcâ, tamen usque recurret,
Etmala perrumpet furtim fastidia victrix.”

Among the various objects of picturesque beauty, the cottage, whether ornamented or not, has been but slightly noticed ; and I do not recollect to have seen any attempt to lay down rules for the management of such buildings upon picturesque principles. I am aware of the great difficulty that attends the undertaking ; but, as some rule, however imperfect, is more useful than vague and uncertain plans without any fixed principle for their guide, my purpose is, to give a few hints upon the subject.

Various designs for cottages and other rural buildings have been published from time to time; but they do not include those minute circumstances, both external and internal, upon which effect and character so much depend. Every building, from the proudest temple to the meanest hovel, possesses a peculiar character; grandeur and magnificence, enriched with every studied ornament, are the pre-eminent features of the former; while humility and simplicity as strongly characterize the latter: to endeavour to preserve this character, is the object of the following Essays.

The first of these relates to the
cottage

cottage appropriate to the residence of a gentleman ; or, in other words, to the ornamented Cottage.

The second Essay treats of the grounds and out-buildings, as connected with the ornamented Cottage ; together with its appendages, as huts, seats, bridges, sheds, &c.

Perhaps, of all situations, the romantic retirement of a rural cottage is likely to produce the highest and most refined relish for social happiness : “ True and social happiness,” says Zimmerman, “ resides only in the bosom of love, or in the arms of friendship ; and can only be really enjoyed by congenial hearts and kindred

dred minds in the domestic bowers of privacy and retirement.”

Beneath the rugged features and russet garb of humble life are, not unfrequently, found, feelings the most exquisite, and sentiments that would reflect honour upon the highest situations in life. With a view to cherish these tender and delicate plants, the third Essay takes into consideration the dwellings of the labouring poor ; not only as a source of ornament, but with a view also of pointing out what appears to be an easy mean of bettering the condition and morals of a considerable body of that useful and highly important class of people.

Since

Since the final revision of my MSS. Mr. Repton's new work on Landscape Gardening has made its appearance; and it gives me the greatest pleasure to remark, that where his subject in any degree applies to mine, our opinions are nearly the same.

For the Essays and Sketches which form the Volume now submitted, with the utmost deference, to the Public, I can only say, that the hints which they contain are not the hasty effusions of fancy, but the results of minute attention, in the hours of relaxation from my professional duties, to various scenes both of Nature and Art.

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ESSAY I.

LET me, retir'd from business, toil, and strife,
Close amidst books and solitude my life ;
Beneath yon high-brow'd rocks in thickets rove,
Or meditating wander through the grove ;
Or from the cavern view the noontide beam
Dance on the rippling of the lucid stream ;
While the wild woodbine dangles o'er my head,
And various flowers around their fragrance spread ;
Or where, 'midst scatter'd trees, the opening glade
Admits the well-mixt tints of light and shade ;
And, as the day's bright colours fade away,
Just shews my devious solitary way,
While thickening glooms around are slowly spread,
And glimmering sun-beams gild the mountain's head.
Then homeward as I saunt'ring move along,
The nightingale begins his evening song ;
Chaunting a requiem to departed light,
That smooths the raven-down of sable night.—
When morning's orient beams again arise,
And the day reddens in the eastern skies,
I hear the cawing rooks salute the dawn,
High in the oaks which overhang the lawn.

Knight's Landscape.

ESSAY I.

MAN in his most savage state has no wants but those of appetite, which he supplies by hunting. This, in the earliest stages of barbarism, was his sole employment; shady thickets, trunks of trees, and cavities of rocks, his only shelter from the inclemency of the seasons, and protection from brutes, little inferior to himself in sagacity, and scarcely superior in the savage tenor of their lives.

As the species multiplied, and the necessities of life became more difficult of attainment, society became divided into classes; in which each individual received his appointed task; and, as the state of society advanced, those to whom superiority gave the advantage of leisure, turned their thoughts toward increasing the comforts of life, and acquiring intellectual enjoyments. Building, one of the most necessary improvements, became the

earliest object of attention. Thus, says Vitruvius, the first ground-sill was laid, on which they placed upright posts, and rudely framed a roof; from which mean beginning the superb and pompous edifices of architecture have proceeded.

Many ages, however, elapsed before buildings arrived at any greater perfection than what was dictated by rude necessity. In the tenth century, buildings of more solid materials than wood covered with reeds were scarcely known in England; of such were churches and monasteries constructed, or chiefly so, as appears by one of the charters of King Edgar, which speaks of the ruinous condition of all the monasteries in England, which consisted only of rotten boards.

A Cottage, to use the word in its literal sense, means a house of small dimensions, appropriated to the use of the lower class of people; but to buildings of this description, the fashion of the present day has added one which bears a distinct character, and is known by the appellation of the ornamented or adorned cottage.

The

The expense employed, and the different rank in life of its inhabitants, giving the ornamented cottage a superiority in point of taste and consequence, I shall take that part of my subject first under consideration.

As a retreat from the hurry of a town-life, the ornamented cottage is rational and elegant; and it is only to be condemned when carried beyond the bounds of that simplicity which should be its characteristic distinction.

Of late, the ornamented cottage has frequently become the residence of people of fortune; it is, perhaps, to a mind delighting in retirement, the happy apparent medium between poverty and riches; and, if well executed, throws an air of romance over a rural residence, that is extremely pleasing. From repeated observation, however, I am inclined to believe, that there is more difficulty in the proper management of such buildings than is generally imagined; and I am the more confirmed in this opinion, from having oftener seen the projectors of them

fail in producing the desired effect, than succeed, even in a tolerable degree.

In order to produce a striking effect, the senses must be powerfully appealed to; and this can only be accomplished, by making the *artificial* approach as near to the *real* as possible. Every one must too frequently have seen buildings of this kind destitute of every characteristic qualification but the name, to render them what they were designed for; and, what is still worse, the ground that they encumber, which might have been formed to elegance under the direction of taste, becomes disgusting, in proportion to the extent that is occupied. Of this want of character, I have myself seen many instances; some particularly glaring; while others, although equally destitute of the principles of taste, yet, being composed of more harmonious materials, were somewhat less offensive.

The different materials employed in cottage architecture should depend, in some measure, on local circumstances. If placed
within

within a convenient distance of brick, that material is most probably used; but if in a country abounding in strong clay and wood, they are, for the poorer cottages especially, most commonly employed, as cheapest and most convenient. In former times, we find, scarcely any other materials were adopted; and, in point of effect, they were certainly superior to every other. Straw or reeds were also the most usual coverings; and these indeed have been pretty much in use till within the last half century; few houses in the country, even the better sort of farm-houses, having previous to that time been roofed in any other manner. It is, however, neither a coat of thatch nor Gothic windows that are sufficient to give the true character to a cottage scene; but it is from a combination of pleasing forms and colours, so as to produce an agreeable whole, that we are to expect success: its situation also should be considered; it must, if possible, be so placed, as to make a pleasing object in the landscape, and at the same time to be a comfortable retreat to its inhabitants.

Yet e'en in countries where the gen'rous soil
 Teems with variety to crown your toil,
 Waste not, too prodigal, the joys of sight,
 Which, bought by exercise, yield new delight ;
 Raise expectation, flattering hopes inspire :
 Enjoyment owes her pleasures to desire.

De Lille's Gardens.

It is as great an error to disclose too much of the landscape, as not to shew enough ; but either carried to extremes is wrong ; for, by the former, we preclude all relish for further pursuit ; and by the latter, that which would have produced a pleasing effect by less frequent interruption, is rendered futile by the very means intended to produce it. In fixing, therefore, a situation whereon to build a house, it would probably be advisable to chuse neither the best nor the worst point of sight ; so that the inhabitant may neither be disgusted when at home, nor induced to remain there longer than is agreeable, for want of objects to attract his attention.

Simplicity cannot be too much attended to in rural buildings ; it should ever be the reigning object : yet simplicity need not exclude

clude taste; indeed, the words are in most instances, and particularly in this synonymous; for, unless the former appear, the richest ornaments will not produce the latter.

The poet, the painter, and the actor, all derive their resources from Nature; and, however they may deviate from their model upon particular occasions for the sake of effect, she is primarily the object of all their efforts. Thus, if we take nature in a general sense, we may be allowed to include such objects as by long knowledge become naturalized to the soil upon which they stand. In this point of view, the baronial castle, the ruined abbey, or the humble cottage, by carrying us back to times past, or being combined as objects in a scene, become as much a part of nature, as the soil itself, the trees, and the grass which adorn it, the horse, the cow, or, in short, as any other object animate or inanimate. A proper attention to this principle will be a preventive, or at least a mean of correction, of those various incongruities which we see continually creeping into improvements that aim at scenic effect.

In

In cottage architecture, which is certainly a very humble part of that superb science, we have it not in our power to produce either grandeur or sublimity; the style neither requires nor admits such attempts; all that we have to attend to then, in the ornamented cottage, is, that whatever deviations may be admitted for the accomplishment of the effect, they should be so managed as to be acknowledged rather than seen; for the great end is, in all the arts, that, provided the effect is produced, the manner in which it is brought about is of little consequence.

A person dressed out in a variety of colours, opposite in their effects, is generally acknowledged to have very little claim either to taste or simplicity; it will be equally impossible to arrive at either in rural ornament which does not correspond with the surrounding objects. Upon this ground, every material of a strong harsh colour should be rejected; the fierce red brick, or the perfect white * of a wash of lime, are equally disgusting.

* " In general, the Welsh gentlemen in these parts seem

gusting. The characteristic mark of a cottage is humility, as if, conscious of its inferiority, it should appear to retire beneath the shelter of its friendly woods; which it would not do, were it fabricated of glaring colours and costly materials. This being granted, it will evidently strike the imagination, that it is necessary to make use of materials of a quiet sober colour, as best adapted to produce that harmony, without which simplicity of form will be of no avail; it is indeed destroyed; and

seem fond of whitening their houses, which gives them a disagreeable glare. A speck of white is often beautiful; but white in profusion is, of all tints, the most inharmonious. A white seat at the corner of a wood, or a few white cattle grazing in a meadow, enliven a scene, perhaps, more than if the seat or the cattle had been of any other colour: they have meaning and effect. But a front and two staring wings; an extent of rails; a huge Chinese bridge; the tower of a church; and a variety of other large objects, which we often see daubed over with white, make a disagreeable appearance; and unite ill with the general simplicity of Nature's colouring.

“ In animadverting, however, on white objects, I would only censure the mere raw tint.—It may be easily corrected, and turned into stone colours of various hues; which though light, if not too light, may often have a good effect.”

Gilpin's Wye, p. 94.

and the unity between the building and the landscape must be lost.

This, one would think, must appear obvious to every gentleman, particularly to those professing to have taste; yet I have more than once seen the humble cottage of the labourer, not only deficient in simplicity, but so much so in point of harmony, as to be a positive beacon to the country around. Where true taste resides, I am persuaded that pure white walls, blue tiles, green shutters, and similar puerilities, will never be found. Frippery, thus employed about the cottage, destroys simplicity, and gives it the tricked-out appearance of many of the small houses in the suburbs of the metropolis.

Let the building, therefore, be composed of whatever material it may, its outside appearance should have nothing glaring. The colour of clay or mud walls may be happily imitated by a wash or plaister, tinged of its proper hue, either with ochre, or any other colouring material that may be preferred, previous to its being laid on the walls.

There

There is another kind of plaister, called rough-cast, formed by forcibly dusting with sand the surface of the plaister when wet ; or, what is better than sand when they can be had, the small beach stones : their colour is excellent ; and by penetrating deeper into the mortar they render it very hard and durable. Even in a well-wrought stone building there is considerable harmony ; the beach pebbles in particular, both for neatness and colour (which is generally a light grey), are to be preferred ; and were the mortar in which they are set, to be tinged of a similar hue, it would add much to the harmony of the whole. But, as in all stone buildings, whether the beach pebbles or gravel-pit stones are used, it is necessary to carry up the corners, as well as the breaks of the doors and windows, with brick-work, it is needless, perhaps, to add, that this part of the work should, by artificial means, be made to correspond as nearly with the colour of the building as may be ; red or white should at all events be avoided ; for either, opposed to the more sober tint of the stone work, will produce a chequered contrast, as well as formality, that is utterly destructive to repose.

Than

Than such glaring contrasts, which we frequently see exhibited, to the eye of taste nothing can be more disgusting ; and that of red bricks combined with stones is among the most common, particularly along the eastern part of the coast, for cottages, barns, stables, &c. That these errors should be committed by the multitude, who are supposed to build for mere convenience, is not to be wondered at ; all extrinsic ornament is out of the question ; but when we see them committed by gentlemen, actually professing rural improvement, they excite our astonishment, and call loudly for correction. Time will in some measure perform this friendly office, by partially covering both the brick and stone work with stains, mosses, and lichens ; but time is a slow operator, and ought therefore to be assisted by art.

After all, however, the clay or mud-coloured walls are far better calculated to produce the intended effect, than any other tint of a deeper hue, like that of flint or beach pebbles : there is a warmth of colouring in the ochrey tinge of a mud wall*, which grey can never
assume,

* Whitening, lowered to a dark stone colour by a proper

assume, although assisted by all the charms of sunshine. Such cold tints better accord with the gloomy grandeur of the Gothic tower.

The next material consideration is, to what height a cottage may be carried; and what kind of covering is most applicable to such a building. With regard to the first, the ornamented cottage ought not to be less than two stories; and if the roof be pitched high, it is rendered more picturesque, and room is left to convert that part into garrets. The height of all buildings, however, ought to be determined in some measure by their size; the height of the rooms, in a house built in the cottage style, should not exceed eight feet, or from that to nine, which will allow the rooms to be of sufficient size for every degree of comfort.

A small house, run up to a great height, has an appearance of insignificance; while a large building is rendered heavy, by not having

proper proportion of yellow ochre and black, either used as a wash, or, what is better, incorporated with the plaister itself, is perhaps equal, if not superior, in its effect, to every other colour.

ing a due proportion of height ; but, whether large or small, a cottage should be rather low than lofty.

I have before observed, that most of the older farm-houses and cottages were covered with straw or reeds, which, though less frequent than formerly, are still in common use. Reed, in particular, from its neatness and simplicity of colour, is so unexceptionable, that of all others I think it is to be preferred for rural buildings : indeed, I am certain that those effects which are the very life and soul of landscape painting, or rural ornament, could not be so well produced by any other covering. There is only one circumstance that can be alleged against it ; I mean fire : this certainly has some weight ; but as it is chiefly in towns where great danger is to be apprehended, I see no reasonable objection to it for roofs to detached buildings in the country ; while, in point of durability, and as a preservative to the timbers, nothing is superior.

Mr. Kent, speaking of the covering of rural buildings, says, “ The covering is of three kinds ; Dutch tile generally for the
houses,

houses, and the common pantiles for stables and barns; or sea or marsh reed, which is excellent in quality and neatly put on. The general cost for reed and workmanship, and every thing complete, is a guinea a square. *No covering is so good as this*, as it will preserve a roof twice as long as tile.

“ Where straw is used for thatch, I earnestly recommend the excellent practice of the West of England, where the straw is combed quite clean of weeds, the ears of the corn cut off, and reed (as it is there called) laid on in whole pipes, unbruised by the flail. The consequence is, that it is twice as durable, and in its appearance much better.”

Thatch also is warm, and picturesque beyond any other covering; especially when time has given it some spirited touches, just sufficient to break its evenness of surface, without imparting an idea of dampness; and in point of harmony no other covering can agree in an equal manner, either with the other parts of the building, or with the surrounding objects.

C

There

There is the same objection to the use of tiles, particularly the red sort, that there is to brick walls; a cottage with such a covering no longer retains its quiet colour * ;
and

* One of the most charming effects of sunshine is, its giving to objects, not merely light, but that mellow golden hue so beautiful in itself, and which, when diffused, as in a fine evening, over the whole landscape, creates that rich union and harmony, so enchanting in Nature and in Claude. But if either in Claude or in Nature any one object should be introduced of so glaring a white as not to partake of the general hue, the whole attention, in spite of all our efforts to the contrary, will be drawn to that one point; if there are several, the eye will be distracted among them. Again, (to consider it in another view) when the sun breaks out in gleams, there is something that delights and surprises, in seeing an object, before only visible, lighted up in splendour, and then gradually sinking into shade. But a whitened object is already lighted up; it remains so when every thing has retired into obscurity; it still forces itself into notice; still impudently stares you in the face.

A cottage of a quiet colour, half concealed among trees, with its bit of garden, its pales and orchard, is one of the most tranquil and soothing of all rural objects; and, when the sun strikes upon it, and discovers a number of picturesque circumstances, one of the
most

and when in a state of decay, when green with moss, and the roof sunk in, it conveys to the imagination an equal degree of dampness, and more of desolation, than the roof of thatch, without its picturesque effect. But it may not be amiss to say, that a great deal of the effect of a thatched roof depends upon the manner in which it is applied.

Unless the eaves project a considerable way over every part, the building will have a mean appearance, and lose that depth of shadow for which reed covering is so eminently conspicuous, and which is greatly increased by suffering it also to project over the gable ends in an ample manner : it is needless to say, that the windows in the roof, and the porch, if there be one, should be managed in the same way. Windows in the roof of a cottage add greatly to its effect; they break the regularity of its surface, and produce a pleasing variety.

C 2

In

most cheerful ; but if cleared round and whitened, its modest retired character is gone, and succeeded by a perpetual glare.

Price on the Picturesque.

In the review of all objects, we are apt to associate certain ideas, and to make them our standard of judgment. To a barn, for instance, we know that windows are unnecessary; and this knowledge reconciles us to its long, blank, unbroken roof. We look not for other windows than the loop holes in its sides, for the purpose of admitting air; but in the habitation of man, we consider every part as occupied, and requiring not only light and air, but a certain degree of cheerfulness and comfort. In the barn it is not common to project the roof over the ends; but this, in a picturesque view, although it adds to its length, would receive more than a proportionate advantage in the beauty of its gables.

Warmth and solidity appear to be characteristic of the thatched roof; and this is probably another reason for its being preferred. It may be advanced on the other hand, that red tile conveys an appearance of more warmth than any other covering; but this is merely as far as colour is concerned; we cannot join this with any other quality in the material that is capable of assisting it; it is hard, and composes a surface of various joints;

joints; but in a coat of reeds, thickness, softness, and colour, all unite to give it that appearance of warmth, which colour alone, in this instance, cannot impart. The projecting eaves also of a thatched roof, by giving a greater breadth of light and shadow to the building, greatly heighten it as a picturesque object.

Next to thatch, slate (where it can be had upon the spot), for neatness and harmony of colour, is the material to be preferred. But unless the building is in the neighbourhood of a slate quarry, or in a situation where slate can be procured at an easy rate, and is in frequent use, it breaks in upon frugality, the appearance of which should never be overlooked. In a large house, where luxury and expense are supposed to reside, extrinsic ornaments may be allowed; but in the cottage, unless the material, be it what it may, can be commanded at a moderate expense, and, when used, appear in its proper place, it ought to be rejected.

If slate be used, the projection of the eaves beyond the walls ought to be carried

even to a greater extent than in thatch ; the roof should also be comparatively flat. In a large building, surrounded by a parapet wall, the roof is but little seen ; but in a cottage, where the roof forms a principal part of the building, it is in itself an object, and requires a different mode of application. Slate, perhaps, is most proper, when used for cottages, where the roof covers only one story.

The same kind of covering that is employed in the building, should be used on the porch ; which, if well managed, appears to be the best mode of entrance, and is certainly the most picturesque. It is in itself a good object, and forms a pleasing gradation in the detail of the building, which it connects with the ground, and holds the same relation to it, as shrubs do to trees, and the smaller plants and flowers to shrubs. It has also the good effect of breaking the regularity of the building, and of preventing its starting too suddenly from the ground. In some instances, I have seen the eaves of the porch project sufficiently to admit of billet-wood for the fire being piled up under it, and being
entirely

entirely sheltered from the weather, which was far from having an unpleasing effect; but where the eaves, either of the house or the porch, are made to project in any considerable degree, some support underneath is requisite, to preserve the edges unbroken.

Where a cottage is carried up to the height of only one story, there is less necessity for a porch. In a cottage that I have lately seen, the door, placed at one corner, is sheltered by a continuation of the roof, supported by plain wood posts. This is an example worthy of imitation; and when its roof and walls shall have been chastened with a few soft touches of nature, it will be a most pleasing object.

Unless the porch is managed with great simplicity, however, it is undoubtedly the worst kind of entrance that can be adopted in cottage architecture; and of this, instances might be adduced, where the elegant taste of the owner could not be disputed. I allude to the mistaken idea of attaching an entrance proper for a mansion to a mere cottage covered with reed; with which, a portico supported

ported by elegantly-formed pillars and pilasters is totally incongruous.

If a rustic colonnade or portico be desired, let it be in character with the building to which it is attached. Trees of a proper size, in their rough state, having only the bark taken off, are the most proper supports; around which the ivy or the woodbine may be properly trained, sometimes wholly, sometimes partially hiding these natural columns, adorned by the varnished leaves of the one, or the gay and luxuriant festoons of the other.

If we refer to those painters of the Dutch or Flemish schools who have introduced such buildings into their works, we may find an infinite variety of examples to our purpose; no other works afford so much of that picturesque effect which arises from sudden deviation and irregularity of parts; to which they join an infinity of lesser objects, which might be transferred to practice, or from which other ideas might spring, productive of great advantages. In their buildings, be their forms ever so rude, you find them truly consistent; they seldom offend by introducing ornaments
foreign

foreign to their subject. The column, the portico, the rich balustrade, and the ruined temple, however beautiful in the pictures of Claude, can find no place but in the elevated scenes to which they belong ; so much, indeed, is due to consistency, and to a proper association of ideas, that if the objects themselves, from which Claude deduced his most beautiful subjects, were placed as the ornaments of a scene in Holland or Flanders, they would be as much out of place, as a Grecian portico attached to a clay-walled cottage.

Façades of trellis-work, surrounding either doors or windows, never produce a good effect ; there is a certain degree of littleness of appearance at all times connected with work of that kind, whether used in this way, as the railing of a bridge, a gate, or in any other manner. They are also generally painted white, or green, which, in scenes of this kind, is foreign to every principle of harmony ; and although every thing that is slovenly offends and ought to be avoided, we ought equally to avoid a dressed appearance, which would destroy the connexion that should ever subsist between the house and the grounds.

grounds. It may be said, that the ornamented cottage admits of dressing. I grant that it will allow better finishing in parts, perfect neatness, and around it a little more ornament from shrubs and flowers; but from the moment that dressing, in the common acceptation of the word, commences, simplicity is invaded; and in its fall is accompanied by effect, taste, elegance, and, in short, every thing for which it was to be admired. Surely frippery is not at all more necessary in the adorned than in the unadorned, or labourer's cottage. To steer the middle course in matters of this kind, and to avoid either extreme, is not the least worthy effort of taste.

It is a general and fashionable custom, to fit up a cottage with Gothic windows: I do not, however, think either the pointed window, or the sash, altogether consistent with the simplicity of the building. I am aware, that in the latter opinion I am differing from a great master*, for whose principles I entertain the highest respect and deference; but when we consider the character of the
building,

* See Gilpin's Western Tour.

building, the materials made use of in its construction, and the style of architecture employed, I trust I shall not be thought inconsistent in rejecting sashes, as foreign to the purpose. The common casement, divided into three parts, and of greater width than height, appears to be the most in character with such buildings as are now under consideration.

This kind of window need not be adopted, to the exclusion of either light or comfort; let it, if required, be of ample dimensions, with squares of glass neither small nor ordinary. It has a good effect if the frames be massy, and even the light divided by the old-fashioned munnions; and if not of oak, they should be painted to represent it.

The pointed, or, as it is termed, the Gothic window, has, I apprehend, introduced more depravity of taste into rural architecture than any other thing whatsoever. To make a window of that form pleasing, requires a variety of minute circumstances which are not generally attended to. Indeed, it may
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be the misapplication of the pointed window, rather than any unfitness in itself, that may make us wish to reject it; for I have seen windows of this kind produce an excellent effect: in this instance, however, as in every other, so much depends on use, that the disgust produced, is more likely to have been the consequence of a wrong application, than of any defect in the thing itself; but, in fact, so little are the true principles of taste regarded, that, did not the chimneys mark the intention, the edifice might be, and frequently has been, mistaken for a church or chapel rather than a dwelling. Sacred edifices should have a marked character; pointed windows, as more common to such buildings, give that character more strongly, and on this account alone, in such situations, are most proper.

The pointed window, however, need not be wholly excluded from cottage architecture; it only requires to be properly applied, and combined with such other circumstances as may fit it for its situation. It may be introduced, either singly in particular situations, or intermixed with others of the common form.

form *. This in a great measure breaks that formality which the pointed window is very apt to exhibit. Great regard also ought to be paid to the form of this kind of window; one fault is, that they are generally too small; and it is not uncommon to see a building, two stories high, with only two of these small windows in the whole front, one on each side

* A doubt may arise, whether the mixture of pointed windows with square is admissible in any kind of architecture. I have certainly seen such a mixture in cottage architecture produce a capital effect. A cottage, or any other building, is rendered more picturesque where parts have been added at different times, as it happened to suit the taste or convenience of the proprietor: witness also many of our old cathedrals, where we see the intermixture of Saxon and Gothic architecture, of round and pointed arches. It is this jumble that so frequently produces the picturesque in a high degree; and, without entering into the propriety of such additions, to the painter at least, it would be a great mortification to see such buildings replaced by more regular architecture: such mixtures may also be said to break and blend character. I grant, that in some cases the mixture would be highly incongruous; but if in others a compound character more suited to the occasion be produced, and particularly where it does not interfere with the orders of architecture, it appears to me to be perfectly allowable.

side of the door ; those lighting the chambers being placed in the opposite side of the building, or a large one at each end, lighting both upper and lower apartments. Such practices give a house a mean appearance ; while such a space of blank wall takes much from that cheerfulness and comfort which every habitation should possess, as far as situation will allow. I grant a degree of locality in this mode of building ; but that it is adopted at all, and by some few admired, is a sufficient apology for noticing its defects.

The next consideration that presents itself is, whether painted or stained glass be admissible in the design of the ornamented cottage. For two reasons I think it is. First, its general use in such situations in some measure warrants it ; and, secondly, the romantic character of the design is increased by it, and receives from it a certain air of originality that strikes upon the imagination.

When well managed, coloured glass is capable of producing a most pleasing effect ; but it must be in a mass, and that a pretty large one, to give it all its value. We may
admire

admire a single piece of glass, for the beauty of its execution, or the splendour of its colours; but seen in a mass, the detail is forgotten, and we admire it, not for what it is, but for the effect which it produces; that sweet solemnity, that peculiar and universal tint, which is only to be acquired by a partial exclusion of light through a coloured medium, and which was formerly accomplished by means of two tints only.

“ Her Gothic temples dimm’d with solemn shade
Of calcin’d glass distain’d ; tho’ not as now,
Gay with the colours of the solar bow ;
Two simple tints alone their aid supply’d,
And ingress to the rushing light deny’d.”

“ The gloom of a painted window in old cathedrals,” says Mr. Gilpin, “ is very pleasing; but I should desire only ornamental scrolls. The best painted windows I remember to have seen, were (I believe in the chapel) at Magdalen College, Oxford. They are single figures, and only in *clair obscure*. They are the best, because they are the least glaring.”

In general, I am entirely of Mr. Gilpin’s opinion with respect to quiet colours; but, in
a painted

a painted window, there is a warmth and richness from the glow of the orange, lake, and other tints of that class, particularly towards sun-set, that to me is very pleasing. But of the superiority of the one over the other I cannot form a proper judgment, having never, that I recollect, seen painted glass in clear obscure in sufficient quantity to be acquainted with its effect.

The whole coloured stained glass that is now in common use in ornamented windows, though of beautiful colours, certainly produces a glaring, and even an unpleasant effect. There is no gradation of colour; the contrast between blues, reds, greens, orange, and purples, is too glaring; it destroys all unity, and, instead of producing that solemnity, that glowing yet delightful repose, so grateful to the eye where all those colours melt into each other, it only forms a chequered patch-work.

I know not whether the scheme could be accomplished at the glass manufactories; but I have often conceived, that if glass could be made to resemble marbled paper, as far
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as colours and effect are concerned, it would be an excellent substitute for painted glass. There is a variety in the disposal of the colours that is amusing, no two pieces being exactly like each other. The experiment may be easily tried, by making transparent a piece of marbled paper, the colouring of which is rather warm; this, placed on a window against the light, will have a very pleasing effect.

Although I am an advocate for coloured glass, however, we ought to guard against the too indiscriminate use of it. The most beautiful productions, both in nature and art, by being constantly in view, cease to operate upon the mind in an equal degree with those which are less frequently seen. I would, therefore, confine it principally to a single apartment; but there it should be lavished in profusion; for in profusion only can it give that peculiar character which it is intended to produce.

The lover of rural retirement, generally speaking, possesses a cultivated mind; the Study, therefore, I should conceive to be the most eligible room for a display of this kind,

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the furniture of which is better calculated to harmonize with painted glass than any other. The action of the mind also depends greatly upon certain objects* for reducing it to its proper tone for study or reflection. The solemn grove and “the long-drawn aisle*,” rendered

* “The use of painted or stained glass is thought to have begun about the time of Henry the Third: this kind of ornament, as it diminished the light, induced the necessity of making an alteration in the windows, either by increasing their number, or enlarging their dimensions; for such a gloominess, rather than over-much light, seems more proper for such sacred edifices, and better calculated for collecting the thoughts, and fixing the pious affections; yet, without that alteration, our churches had been too dark and gloomy; as some of them now, divested of that ornament, for the same reason, appear too light.

“To what height of perfection modern architecture (I mean that with pointed arches, its chief characteristic) was carried on in this kingdom, appears by one complete specimen of it, the chapel founded by King Henry the Eighth. The decorations, harmony, and proportions of the several parts of this magnificent fabric, its fine painted windows, and richly ornamented roof, its gloom and perspective, all concur in affecting the imagination with pleasure and delight, at the same time that they inspire awe and devotion.”

Bentham's History of Ely.

rendered still more awful by its richly painted windows, the stillness, and the dim obscurity that towards twilight reigns around, rank among the first of pleasing and impressive scenes. To enable us to apply with attention, our thoughts should be abstracted from all external objects; for which reason, many persons prefer reading by candle-light to any other time of the day. An apartment, therefore, admitting no more light than is necessary, I should think most proper for the enjoyment as well as the advantages of study. Where painted glass is used in large masses, the windows ought to be of a proportionate size: perhaps no kind of window is so well calculated for the admission both of light and effect as the bow, the middle space of which may be entirely filled, while each side may contain merely a sufficient quantity to preserve unity and complete the design*.

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* It has been questioned, how far the bow window is applicable to the mud-coloured or plastered cottage. I can only say, that I have seen it, when thatched like the upper parts of the house, appear not only in character, but perfectly modest in its effect. I wish it to be understood, that I do not mean the sashed bow

The effect produced by such a mass would be so different from what a single pane could aspire to, that it need by no means exclude

of modern date, but of the characteristic solidity of the architecture of Henry the Eighth, or Queen Elizabeth. With regard either to that or any other window being ornamented with stained glass, the outside appearance of the building is not affected by it; and even in the inside, false windows, ornamented with stained glass, may be made, to take off or put on at pleasure, though this is what I should not recommend, as a great deal of the effect depends upon the panes being recessed within the deep projecting munnions of the windows, whether of wood or stone.

Stained glass has the peculiar property of reducing every other thing in the apartment to its proper tone. Without inquiring whether our modern apartments are not too light, we wish not to degenerate into the absolute gloominess of former days. But in those few apartments which remain to us unimpaired by the intrusion of modern innovation, I only appeal to the feelings of those who are given to observation, whether the frippery of modern times, although it may make a momentary impression, be capable of conveying lasting pleasure. Only let us compare the modern room and the furniture in it in a state of decay, with that of former times; the one will wear the appearance of poverty dressed out with trumpery; the other will, in a degree, preserve its dignity, though inhabited by poverty, and tumbling to ruin.

clude beautiful single pieces, which may properly be called cabinet pieces, from the other apartments, which would indeed have their use, independent of their beauty, by carrying on the design. As I have before said, such cabinet pieces are generally esteemed for their colour or execution; the minute beauties of which are, in some measure, overlooked amidst the splendour of a large mass.

The public has of late been much indebted to two gentlemen of the city of Norwich, for bringing into this country some of the finest specimens of painted glass, perhaps, that are extant; and no less so for the liberal manner in which they indulged the general curiosity, by a gratuitous exhibition of it.

Having myself seen this splendid exhibition two or three times, which I understand has since been removed for sale to London, containing pieces of all sizes and subjects, from the designs of the first masters, I feel myself better enabled to speak on the application of it.

I am well aware, that the expense with which treasures of this kind are procured, may be urged as a powerful objection to the introduction of them as the ornament of a cottage : and that any thing so expensive, and difficult to procure, is inconsistent with the nature of the design.

In the first place I have to remark, that the most expensive thing may be so applied as to appear without ostentation, and not to interfere with the simplicity of the design ; and, secondly, that the cost (as in this instance, where it does not clash with the harmony of the whole, either within or without) is in some degree obviated by the nature of the design, an ornamented or adorned cottage.

But to such as can rest satisfied with an equal effect, produced at an inferior expense, I would recommend windows painted in oil colours upon ground glass. I know of some, at this time, that have braved the vicissitudes of seasons without any visible change to their disadvantage ; and, when out of the reach of the touch, would defy the best judges to discover the deception.

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Where this plan is adopted, any subject can be executed which fancy may suggest. The numbers of pictures and prints of all subjects afford more than a sufficient choice ; whereas in the collection of old stained glass, it is seldom that much choice is allowed ; the purchaser must be content with such gleanings as are left him, and pick up these as he can.

It had been a generally-received opinion, that the art of painting on glass was lost ; but this has been clearly proved an erroneous idea by the Earl of Orford, (Mr. Horace Walpole) in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, under the head Peter Olivar, where he traces the art up to the year 1757.

The subjoined note * from that valuable
work,

* “ It may not be unwelcome to the curious reader, to see some anecdotes of the revival of taste for painted glass in England. Price, as I have said, was the only painter in that style for many years in England. Afterwards one Rowell, a plumber at Reading, did some things, particularly for the late Henry Earl of Pembroke ; but Rowell’s colours soon vanished.

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work, as particularly interesting to the lovers of this art, I shall transcribe for the sake of those

At last he found out a very durable and beautiful red ; but he died in a year or two, and the secret with him. A man at Birmingham began the same art in 1756, or 1757, and fitted up a window for Lord Lyttelton, in the church of Hagley, but soon broke. A little after him one Peckitt, at York, began the same business, and has made good proficiencie. A few lovers of the art collected some dispersed panes from ancient buildings, particularly the late Lord Cobham, who erected a Gothic temple at Stowe, and fitted it with arms of the old nobility, &c. About the year 1753, one Asciotti, an Italian, who had married a Flemish woman, brought a parcel of painted glass from Flanders, and sold it for a very few guineas to the Hon. Mr. Bateman, of Old Windsor. Upon that I sent Asciotti again to Flanders, who brought me 450 pieces ; for which, including the expense of his journey, I paid him thirty-six guineas. His wife made more journeys for the same purpose, and sold her cargoes to one Palmer, a glazier in St. Martin's Lane, who immediately raised the price to one, two, and five guineas for a single piece, and fitted up entire windows with them, and with Mosaics of plain glass, of different colours. In 1761, Paterson, an auctioneer at Essex-house in the Strand, exhibited the first two auctions of painted glass, imported in like manner from Flanders. All this manufacture consisted in rounds of Scripture stories, stained in black and yellow, or in small figures of black and white, birds and flowers in colours, and Flemish coats of arms."

those few who may never have read the work itself. After what has been said about painted glass and its application, it can be scarcely necessary to add, that it ought to be assisted by the adoption of a corresponding style in the decorations and furniture of the apartment. The harmonizing hue of oak or wainscoat, whether used in the fitting up, or as the furniture of the room, cannot be excelled. The black furniture of ancient days, particularly chairs and tables, and even some of the same kind in modern use, when simple in their forms and of one hue (not picked out with a variety of gaudy colours) may be made to unite in no unpleasing manner to the general intention. Mahogany, in any form, ought to be rejected, as foreign to that simplicity which should ever be considered as the first principle of the ornamented cottage.

I have before remarked, that, in order to produce any striking effect by the introduction of coloured glass, it ought chiefly to be confined to one apartment, to which it may impart a character entirely new. Should it, however, be wished to introduce something

thing of a similar effect in other rooms, in order to heighten the romantic character of the whole, let it be done with nature's materials; suffer the tendrils of the ivy to mantle luxuriantly over the windows, opposing its transparent varnished leaves as a skreen to the too powerful rays of the western sun.

Should it encroach too much (as a favourite too frequently does) upon the liberty allowed it, a judicious application of the pruning knife will not only be a means of correction, but of moulding it to fancy's will; not that fancy is to be allowed to reduce it to particular or fantastic forms, but to curtail its too luxuriant growth, departing from nature as little as possible: in this state ivy certainly gives a nearer idea of the intricate tracery work of a Gothic window, and the effect of coloured glass, than any thing besides; and this the poet seems also to have conceived:

“ That casement, arch'd with ivy's brownest shade,
First to these eyes the light of Heaven convey'd.”

ROGERS.

The chimneys of cottages come next to
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be considered, and appear to merit particular attention. A single chimney placed in the centre of a building of any size, such as we sometimes see, has but a poor effect; but several chimneys, disposed in different parts, form a varied outline, that is pleasing in any situation, whether opposed to the sky, the woody screen, or any other object; and the smoke ascending from one or more, in beautiful fantastic wreaths, is one among the most pleasing and picturesque scenes of nature.

For the labourer's cottage, the common square chimney, as the most simple, is the best; but for the ornamented cottage, or for the house belonging to the adorned farm, I should recommend a strict attention to the specimens which are frequently offered by the older farm and manorial houses*; some
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* “ The forms of chimneys are not less to be attended to in village-houses than in those on a larger scale, and, in some respects, still more so; for although any poverty of form gives greater offence when mixed with the splendour of architecture, yet, in low houses, the good or bad effect of chimneys is more immediately striking, as they are nearer the eye, and
larger

of which are round, some hexagon, and others octagon, with the top a little enlarged. Some of this kind, built with bricks cast in ornamented moulds, I have seen beautiful, not only in proportion, but in effect; which is also much heightened by the opposition of single chimneys to clusters, of two, three, or four. But as the ornamented work of former times would be now not only exceedingly expensive, but in the present instance of little use, the mere form is all that can be recommended.

Along with the other etceteras attendant upon cottage decoration, it may be well to inquire, how far outside window-shutters may be employed with propriety; not to
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larger in proportion to the building. In old village-houses they have often the same picturesque character, and many of the same decorations, with those of the ancient mansions already described; and, indeed, seem to have been copied from them. These, and a great variety of other forms, differing in a number of circumstances, and all of them with some marked characteristic distinction, are to be found both in pictures and in real buildings."

Price on the Picturesque, Vol. II.

notice those violations of harmony and taste which we sometimes see, where green and blue shutters are patched upon white walls. If window shutters are considered as a necessary safeguard, it is in the ornamented cottage alone that they can be useful; and even there I should wish them to be concealed. As to the cottages of the poor, their humility is generally a sufficient protection: nothing should appear to break in upon the simplicity and repose that is imagined to reside within.

In the mansion, the architect avoids every thing of that kind which may encumber the beauties of his elevation; he places his shutters within. A house of that description is supposed to contain those things which are known to attract the attention of the nightly plunderer; but the cottage, and particularly that of the labourer, may be fairly supposed to possess few things but what his own might supply.

Having thus considered particular parts, it becomes necessary to treat the subject in a
 general

general point of view, to compare the external with the internal, and endeavour to point out the necessity of connecting the interior decorations with the exterior appearance, so as to form one complete whole.

To some this may appear unnecessary. It may be said, the same taste that disposed the external parts with judgment, we should be led to imagine, would naturally carry on the design throughout; but this is so far from being the case, that I scarcely ever saw a cottage (where art had been used), the whole of which perfectly corresponded.

It is generally conceived, that the appearance of a cottage externally is altogether sufficient: this being the case, it is no wonder that we see the inside possessing a character totally different. From the appearance of the external parts of an edifice, we are led to form an idea of the internal, and naturally feel disappointed, not to say disgusted, when the train of our ideas is broken by impropriety. There is no necessity for excluding the comforts of life from the ornamented cottage;
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the plan does not require it; but it requires, that they should be exhibited in as frugal a manner as possible.

The furniture should correspond with the character of the building; chairs of yew-tree, or elm, and tables of oak or wainscoat, should take the place of mahogany. The walls white, or, at most, tinged with a wash of some modest, pleasing colour; while the doors, window-frames, floors, skirting, chimney-pieces, &c. should correspond with the chairs and tables, and be left as from the hands of the carpenter. Those who have never observed the effect of this mode of finishing, cannot be aware of its harmony and character. I have seen very fine examples of it, not only in cottage architecture, but in the sweetly fitted up Gothic library, at Felbrigg Hall, in Norfolk, a seat of the Right Hon. William Windham, where all the book-cases, window-shutters, doors, &c. are left entirely without paint; it is fitted up with wainscoat, and the large Gothic windows are ornamented with stained glass. Paint appears to me to be as unnecessary in the adorned as in the labourer's cottage. It is an adventitious ornament

ornament in the internal parts of a cottage ; and without doors, &c. its place may be supplied by a coat or two of drying oil, which is an excellent substitute, and may also be equally well applied to such internal parts as are exposed to moisture. A receipt has lately been published, under the name of Milk-paint, that appears to deserve attention, particularly when used as a colouring for walls, to which purpose it seems to be much more applicable than for wood work. It is cheap and elegant, much more durable than any water-colour can be, and fully equal to it in the beauty of its surface. I am inclined to think also, that it will much better stand the test of time, or other accidents. The simple white paint is prepared in the following manner ;

Quick-lime six ounces ; Spanish white three pounds ; linseed oil six ounces ; Burgundy pitch two ounces ; skimmed milk two quarts.—These ingredients, properly mixed, will cover twenty-seven square yards.

The lime should be well washed and rubbed down upon a painter's stone, to free it from

from all roughness, before it is mixed with whitening, commonly called Spanish White. The pitch is also to be melted with the oil over a gentle fire, and gradually incorporated with the mixture. Any kind of colouring ingredient may be added, to bring it to the tint required.

Different parts of Gothic buildings, tombs, and shrines, frequently apply very happily to Gothic houses, as chimney-pieces, book-cases, doors, windows, and cielings. I mention these, not as ornaments that could perhaps be made to coincide properly with the simplicity of the cottage : in a larger fabric, as the adorned farm, or professed Gothic mansion, such imitations are the most in character. Of this, Strawberry Hill, the seat of the late Earl of Orford, is an example of the first kind ; designs of the principal parts of which have been published by Mr. Bentley.

If the external parts of a cottage be of an entire Gothic form, the same correspondence should, I think, take place within : every ornament should be in the same style ;

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the chimney-pieces, whether of wood or stone, should partake in their mouldings of the pointed form. But should the outside be of the Grecian character, that is, consist of horizontal instead of perpendicular lines, the same should prevail within; if both these characters appear externally, the same, without offence, may be employed within (provided the harmony is not disturbed); as one continued aim does not seem to have been the original intention. But in these things, although the rule is general, much must depend upon the taste of the designer; for, what in one situation might produce a good effect, may in another be wholly out of place.

Prints, or pictures, though certainly articles of luxury, are such pleasing ornaments, that we should be doing great violence to our feelings not to admit them among the furniture of the ornamented cottage. They are a constant source of amusement; they afford us, even during winter, the idea of the summer's verdure, the summer's sun, or the calm and delightful serenity of morning or evening. That they should be neatly framed, is all that is required; any superfluous ornament
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is not only misapplied, but incurs an expense at least unnecessary, if not injurious. The love of pictures is not confined to persons in the higher situations of life. Do we not see in almost every, the meanest, cottage, ordinary pictures and prints, and, as Mr. Gilpin observes, “even ballads, pasted on the wall with good effect?” Why, then, exclude those of a better sort from a place in the ornamented cottage?

To illustrate the foregoing principles, I shall take a transient view of two ornamented cottages, which have in a more particular manner attracted my attention.

The first, for propriety of ornament, and simplicity of decoration, is superior to most things of the kind. To say that it is completely convenient also, would be going too far; but when we consider what it formerly was, (only a small inconvenient cottage) and what it now is, criticism will perhaps be disarmed by admiration.

This delightful retirement, embosomed in trees, and surrounded with its garden and

little lawn, fronts north and south, and consists of a kitchen, two parlours, and three chambers, besides the garrets in the roof. The parlours, which have thorough lights, are ornamented with spacious windows of the Gothic form, which, with the doors, floors, mouldings, &c. are all of wainscoat, left of its natural hue.

The walls of one of these rooms are lined with a paper of a corresponding colour to the wood-work, upon a white ground; while in the other they are simply white-washed as far as the mouldings, below which they are clothed with a fine matting: this, with the furniture in the same unaffected style, renders them the most pleasing apartments of the kind that I ever saw.

I never think of this sequestered, elegant retreat, but it recalls to my imagination some of the most pleasant hours of my life. Every feature, both within and without, breathes such an air of tranquillity and cheerfulness, that we are at a loss to comprehend from what source it arises, as the situation (taken abstractedly) is by no means beautiful. It
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can, therefore, be only said to spring from that happy taste, which has made Art triumph over the defects of Nature, and that in such a way as to appear only the secondary cause of effect.

“ Scenes must be beautiful, which daily view’d
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years :
Praise justly due to those that I describe.”

COWPER.

The second cottage which I proposed to mention is favoured with every advantage of situation ; and most things externally appear to have been done with a tasteful hand. Planting has been pursued with spirit, and promises a fair reward ; added to which, the spot is formed by Nature to do credit to the hand of Art. The situation of the house is happily chosen, in the bosom of a deep romantic little valley, and commands a beautiful view of the ocean at the distance of about three quarters of a mile ; and, generally speaking, the external effect of the building, and of the whole, with a few trivial exceptions, is good, and such as would reasonably lead us to anticipate a thorough correspondence within. But in this (as is too frequently

the case) we are disappointed: mahogany furniture, and fashionable paper, ill agree with pointed windows, ornamented with stained glass, and doors studded after the Gothic fashion; but which are rendered still more absurd, by being painted of a dead white. Such incongruities, such mixtures of town-fashions with sylvan scenes, are irreconcilable to every idea of true taste, and must, by each destroying the effect of the other, exclude all possibility of producing harmony*. Where this principle is wanting, the eye of taste looks in vain for gratification; where it prevails, although produced with the rudest materials, the effect is sure to please.

An adept in music touching the strings, or running over the keys of an instrument, although wildly, and without regard to tune, but with taste, produces a more pleasing and harmonious effect upon the ear of an observer, than

* “ Congruity and propriety, wherever perceived, appear agreeable; and every agreeable object produceth in the mind a pleasant emotion. Incongruity and impropriety, on the other hand, are disagreeable, and, of course, produce painful emotions.”

Kaimes's Elements of Criticism.

than the best music is capable of affording when played by an unskilful hand. This maxim holds equally good in all the polite arts; which seem to be so nearly connected, that, generally speaking, he who excels in any one of them, would most likely, with application, make no mean progress in any of the others, whether Poetry, Music, Painting, or Gardening.

To this rule, however, there are, doubtless, some exceptions; as I have known those who could draw in a very good style, yet had no ear for music. Where the ear is deficient, poetry must, of course, be cultivated in vain; but to return:

I am persuaded, that gentlemen more frequently fail from not sufficiently studying the subject before they attempt to put it in practice, and for want of observing what has been done by others in the same way, than from any other cause. By closely observing the ideas on which others have acted, and comparing them with our own on the same subject, provided those ideas have been justly
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formed,

formed, we are enabled to copy their excellencies, and avoid their defects.

Taste certainly is the "great first cause," that must operate in every branch of the polite arts, to bring forth peculiar or striking effects; but, unless it is corrected by mature reflection, and some practical experience, it will, at times, run into absurdities *. I need not hint, that, without taste, absurdities must necessarily

* "A taste for the fine arts is a plant that grows naturally in many soils; but, without culture, scarcely to perfection in any soil: it is susceptible of much refinement, and is, by proper care, greatly improved. The man who aspires to be a critic in these arts must pierce still deeper: he must acquire a clear perception of what objects are lofty, what low, what proper or improper, what manly, and what mean or trivial.

"Hence a foundation for reasoning upon the taste of any individual, and for passing sentence upon it: where it is conformable to principles, we can pronounce with certainty that it is correct; otherwise, that it is incorrect, and perhaps whimsical. Thus the fine arts, like morals, become a rational science; and, like morals, may be cultivated to a high degree of refinement."

Kaimes's Elements of Criticism.

necessarily prevail. If, therefore, good taste requires cultivation to increase its powers, it must follow, that where the improver* possesses but a small share of that essential qualification, a close attention to those things and circumstances which are allowed to bear the stamp of taste is doubly necessary, to enable him to act with any degree of consistency, and to prevent his rendering himself ridiculous.

“ Ludere qui nescit, campestribus abstinet armis :

Indoctusque pilæ, discive, trochive, quiescit ;

Ne spissæ risum tollant impunè coronæ :

Qui nescit versus, tamen audet fingere.”

Hor. de Arte Poetica.

So he who is ignorant of the requisites for improving, presumes to improve ; and it would be well if the mischief produced were not more lasting, or more extensive, than that of a bad poem ; from which, the worst evil that can happen, is the loss of time and disappointment to the reader, and the oblivion into which it deservedly sinks ; but the other

is

* Wherever the term improver occurs, I allude to those gentlemen who conduct their own works ; certainly not to the improver by profession.

is a lasting disgrace to its owner and to the neighbourhood.

I think it the more necessary to dwell a little upon this part of my subject, from being fully persuaded that the greater number of rural improvements are undertaken, not only without the smallest previous inquiry or reflection on the subject, but frequently to gratify the whim of the moment ; some persons, probably, thinking it sufficient to be able to say, that so much money was expended in the undertaking ; and concluding, that if all do not admire the taste with which the general arrangement has been made, they must at least be led to form *proper* ideas of the wealth of the projector. This is, however, an unworthy notion ; for, although the multitude, we will allow, may be pleased, it would also, perhaps, be equally pleased (though without knowing why) with a performance that bore the stamp of real merit, and by which the improver, at the same time, would reap the gratification of being not only applauded, but even copied, by those whose taste would do him real honour.

It

It is not always necessary to lavish large sums of money in order to please *; and
in

* Although I have frequently hinted, that unnecessary expense ought by all means to be avoided, I wish to be understood, that I do not mean to consider planting as one of those expenses which are frivolous or unnecessary. But I take leave to say, that with whatever view planting is undertaken, whether for immediate improvement, for posterity, or for public benefit, fir-trees alone, or even in great proportion, will never be adequate to the purpose, however necessary they may be to the rearing of timber; or, by the quickness of their growth, to the giving of present effect: they ought not, therefore, as they too frequently are, to be considered as a first object.

I consider it as an almost indispensable duty in every gentleman to plant, more or less, according to the extent or nature of his property. In almost every spot, there are certain portions which might be set apart for such purposes; and as to the expense incurred, the work must either be very badly managed, or be very unsuccessful indeed, if it do not repay, with interest, both the cost, and the rent of the land employed, even in the most barren wastes.

A gentleman in this neighbourhood *, about twenty-five years since, proposed to plant a considerable
extent

* The Right Hon. W. Windham, of Felbrigg.

in cottage decorations, whether internal or external, it would be absurd. The situation that requires such a sacrifice is unworthy of either the expense or the trouble. Comfort, simplicity, and a sufficient degree of novelty to obtain a certain romantic air for such a dwelling, are all that can be requisite.

It is no unusual thing, for a person who has passed the greatest part of his life in a large and populous city, where he has amassed a fortune, to purchase an estate in the country, as a retirement for the remnant of his days; which having done, he fancies himself capable of planning his own improvements, and makes his first essay upon the house, being resolved to have what he terms “a snug or a neat little box:” which generally turns out to be the most formal thing that imagination

extent of waste heath land with trees of different kinds, oak, ash, beech, birch, and fir; and submitted his plan to a planter of eminence for his opinion; which was, that the land was so bad that the trees would not grow. The gentleman, however, who upon every occasion thinks for himself, was of a different opinion; the ground was planted, and the woods are now rising fast into perfection.

nation can conceive ; totally devoid (not perhaps of convenience, but) of taste and harmony.

The best red brick in the country is generally fixed upon as the most proper material for the work ; to which is added a covering of glazed tiles, than which nothing can be more offensive to the eye. The aching sight can find no repose ; for the stables and coach-house (equally fierce), if the fortune of the possessor required such appendages, I have more than once seen placed upon a line with the dwelling ; the buildings, indeed, have been a few yards asunder ; but without even a paling to separate the stable-yard from the pleasure-ground, of which, in fact, it has composed a part. This is certainly a good method of telling the country that the owner keeps a carriage ; and that he has no objection to its being known. The same taste runs through the gardens, plantations, and every part ; and sometimes, in order to separate the out-buildings from the house, a high wall, forming a garden or court yard before it, disgustingly bounds the view.

Nor

Nor is it to be wondered at, that in such instances inconsistency should reign so conspicuous; for we see it daily among the higher classes of mankind, where we should naturally be led to imagine, that the advantages of a superior education would have given birth to better taste and more correct ideas. In the first instance, we can expect but little; for where the seeds of judgment have not been sown in the mind, no produce can be looked for when our necessities call for action; but, under the advantages of birth and education, we should at least expect to see better combinations produced from mere general ideas, assisted by common observation. So little, however, are some gentlemen in the habit of thinking for themselves, that it is no uncommon thing to see stewards and gardeners overthrow the best imagined plans.

I should not have digressed from my subject by adverting to buildings of a different class, had not the contrast served to place both in a particular point of view. I should be sorry to argue merely for the sake of differing from the common opinion; but of
this

this I surely cannot be fairly accused, while there exist already, and daily are increasing, specimens of false taste, which, unfortunately, will more than confirm my opinion.

I acknowledge myself extremely partial to the cottage style throughout; yet I hope that I am not so blinded by it, as to condemn those who differ from me in opinion, or desire to dictate to any.

In size and convenience, the ornamented cottage and the citizen's box are nearly on a par; and, I confess, I could wish to see the former more generally in the place of the latter, being more consistent with my ideas of rural embellishment; yet, as every one, perhaps the majority, may not be of my opinion, but prefer a house of brick and tile, I have been led to observe a little upon those defects which are too frequently conspicuous in that kind of building, under the idea, that a house, be it composed of whatever materials it may, if taste and judgment reign conspicuous, can never be an object of disgust. With regard to the cottage, if harmony, simplicity,

plicity, and frugality go hand' in hand ; if throughout the whole the same taste and the same principles prevail, keeping also connexion in view, the improver can scarcely fail to produce an effect that will please.

ESSAY II.

INSULT not nature with absurd expense,
Nor spoil her simple charms by vain pretence ;
Weigh well the subject ; be with caution bold,
Profuse of genius, not profuse of gold.

The Gardens of De Lille.

ESSAY II.

THE lines of the motto contain admirable maxims, and such as cannot be too closely followed. Where Nature has been lavish of her bounties, be it the artist's business to improve, not to change, the genius of the place; and let his improvements be rather felt than seen. It is an error too frequent with improvers, to imagine that pleasure must be excited in proportion to the cost.

Having, in the preceding Essay, entered as far as was necessary into the detail of the external and internal decoration of the ornamented cottage, it becomes necessary to take notice of the out-buildings and grounds. Of the former, it is sufficient to say, that they should correspond as much as may be with the cottage itself, to which they are subordinate. Should a barn be required, it may be

placed as a side screen to the house, a station which I have seen it occupy with good effect. The straw-yard need not offend the eye, as a proper area may be formed for it by one side of the barn united with the stables, sheds, &c.

With regard to ornamental buildings in the rural taste, such as huts, sheds, seats, bridges, gates, stiles, &c. they can scarcely be too few, or too simple in their construction. The ground about the ornamented cottage seldom extends to more than a few acres; if any part of this small quantity should lie so far beyond the house itself as to be out of sight, a hut, or rustic pleasure-house, may be erected, but scarcely else; at all events, an eminence (which is not unfrequently chosen for such purposes) should be studiously avoided. A Grecian temple, or an observatory loftily situated, may suit the grounds at Stowe or Blenheim, and occupy such a situation with dignity, the grandeur of the domain admitting of these kinds of ornaments, which, indeed, are rather expected; but in the most extended domain, ornamental objects in profusion, instead of improving, diminish the grandeur

grandeur of the scene *, by breaking it into parts, and the mind is never suffered to rest ; object after object succeed too quickly, and leave no fixed idea. If this be the case, where the extent of ground allows of all that art can invent to produce effect, the consequence on a few acres profusely adorned must be, that simplicity, the only character that could possibly impart grace and beauty to such a spot, would be entirely destroyed.

F 3

To

* “ In gardening, as well as in architecture, simplicity ought to be a ruling principle. Profuse ornament hath no better effect than to confound the eye, and to prevent the object from making an impression as one entire whole. An artist, if destitute of genius for capital beauties, is naturally prompted to supply the defect, by crowding his plan with slight embellishments : hence, in a garden, triumphal arches, Chinese houses, temples, obelisks, cascades, fountains without end ; and in a building, pillars, vases, statues, and a profusion of carved work. Thus some women, defective in taste, are apt to overcharge every part of their dress with ornaments. Superfluity of decoration has another bad effect : it gives the object a diminutive look : an island in a wide extended lake makes it appear larger ; but an artificial lake, which is always little, appears still less, by making an island in it.”

Kaimes's Elements of Crit.

To the adorned farm more may be allowed; but even on this, more than two buildings of the ornamental kind would, I think, be superfluous *. Indeed, the most proper appendages to the adorned farm are its cottages. Every farm employs a certain number of labourers; upon their cottages ornament might be happily bestowed. If the proprietor wished for that variety which a hut or a summer-house would produce, he might at one of these retain to himself the use of a room, which, fitted up to his own taste, would always enjoy an equal, if not a superior, advantage over a more detached building †.

If

* When I confine the adorned farm to two ornamental buildings, I do not mean to exclude a variety of seats: these may be placed wherever they are wanted.

† “ As a number of labourers constitutes one of the requisites of grandeur, comfortable habitations for its poor dependants ought to be provided. It is no more necessary that these habitations should be seen immediately near the palace, than that their inhabitants should dine at the same table; but if their humble dwellings can be made a subordinate part of the general

If a bridge be required, it should be of the simplest form: perhaps we should be guided in its construction by the kind of stream that it has to cross. To the peaceable rivulet gliding in silence along its sedgy channel, and whose waters are almost imperceptible to the eye, the simple plank and rail is best adapted; while to the more active noisy stream, that brawls along a pebbly bed, or tumbles down a precipice, a little more of art is required: the rude arched trunk of some knotty tree, thrown across in its natural state, supported by piles equally rude, adding to it a railing of the same kind, seems in this case most in character with the feature with which it is combined.

A bridge in the Chinese taste, is at best but a frippery ornament in any scene; but in cottage decoration, both that and a bridge of brick or stone are equally improper.

F 4

“ The

neral scenery, they will, so far from disgracing it, add to the dignity that wealth can derive from the exercise of benevolence.”

Repton on Landscape Gardening.

“ The stately arch high rais’d with massive stone,
 The pond’rous flag that forms a bridge alone ;
 The prostrate tree, or rudely propt-up beam,
 That leads the path across the foaming stream,
 May each the scene with different beauty grace,
 If shewn with judgment in its proper place.
 But false refinement vainly strives to please,
 With the thin, fragile bridge of the Chinese.
 Light and fantastical, yet stiff and prim,
 The child of barren fancy turn’d to whim.”

Knight’s Landscape.

I have quoted the first line,

“ The stately arch high rais’d with massive stone,”

merely that the poetry might not be mutilated ; such a bridge being by no means suited to the simple scenery in the environs of a cottage.

The rustic bridge over the stream upon the borders of Sir William Jerningham’s park, at Cossey, in Norfolk, is a model of taste ; its bold elevation, yet simple construction, joined to the materials of which it is composed, render it one of the most interesting objects of the kind that I ever beheld.

Water may be considered among the
 most

most pleasing objects of any scene. Few parts of improved landscape, however, seem to have been more generally misunderstood. Extent appears to have been the leading principle, without attending to situation or circumstances. But it is not my business in this place to enter upon the subject, farther than as it relates to the humble circumscribed scenery of the cottage.

Where a brook runs through the grounds it is a happy circumstance ; and the greatest care should be taken that its character be not injured by the misapplied interference of art.

The banks of a brook, in a flat country, are generally steeper in proportion, or, at least appear so from their want of breadth, than the banks of a river in the same situation ; from which circumstance, the water, except when seen from the brink, is often totally concealed from the eye ; and at a distance is no more to be suspected than the ha ! ha ! It is, nevertheless, capable of being rendered both ornamental and interesting in a great degree.

A well-

A well-placed but unaffected bridge, effectually marks its situation ; while its banks may receive embellishment from the weeping willow *, the alder, and the aspiring poplar. The first two have great picturesque beauty, and heighten each other's charms by opposition of character. The light streaming foliage of the weeping willow never appears to greater advantage, than when contrasted with the dark and well-massed foliage of the alder, whose freshness of colour, and general appearance, place it in no mean rank as a picturesque object.

The

* Mr. Gilpin, with his usual accuracy of applying objects to their proper situations, says of the weeping willow, “ We wish it not to skreen the broken buttresses and Gothic windows of an abbey, nor to overshadow the battlements of a ruined castle ; these offices it resigns to the oak, whose dignity can support them. The weeping willow seeks an humbler scene—some romantic foot-path bridge, which it half conceals—or some glassy pool, over which it hangs its streaming foliage

and dips
Its pendent boughs, stooping as if to drink.

In these situations it appears in character ; and, of course, to advantage.”

The alder partakes more of the character of the oak than any other tree ; indeed, so much does it approach towards it in its general form, that at a short distance it is not easily distinguished. No aquatic tree has an equal advantage in forming a group ; and when its dark foliage overshadows the stream that it adorns, no subject can more powerfully call to mind the simple but sweet scenes so faithfully delineated by the pencil of Waterloo.

In the perfectly silent stream, or the gentle murmur of the distant water-fall, whether by itself, or in concert with other rural sounds, there are peculiar charms : they are often the happy parents of sensations the most tranquil and serene.

“ There is in souls a sympathy with sounds ;
 And, as the mind is pitch'd, the ear is pleas'd
 With melting airs, or martial, brisk, or grave :
 Some chord in unison with what we hear
 Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.
 How soft the music of those village bells,
 Falling at intervals upon the ear
 In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
 Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
 Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on !

With

With easy force it opens all the cells
 Where mem'ry slept. Wherever I have heard
 A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
 And with it all its pleasures.—”

Cowper's Task, Book VI.

The pool is scarcely a less fortunate circumstance than the brook ; and its influence in attracting cattle to the spot, is not among the least of its charms. There is also a variety in the height as well as outline of its banks, that is often highly picturesque ; but if a few beautiful trees, or even a single one, be fortunately added, the effect is doubly pleasing.

For the proper arrangement of such spots, or, indeed, of water in general, the improver can scarcely do better than consult Mr. Price's ingenious Essay on that subject.

Seats should not be too numerous ; and some attention is requisite, in allotting to them their proper situations. Beneath the venerable tree, the aged thorn, the sheltering thicket, or the moss-grown bank, are the most common, as well as, in general, the most proper situations for them. In their construction little else is required, than to be
 careful

careful that they offend not by their formality or their colour. The rude stone, the root of a tree, or a piece of plank supported by posts, are any of them in character. I have seen chairs made of the twisted branches of the oak or elm, truly grotesque, and well adapted to the cottage garden; for in that situation such fantastic seats may be admitted; but at a distance, where the pleasure is supposed to exist in the serenity or beauty of the scene, first impressions should not be broken; no frivolous ornament should impertinently intrude itself to interrupt the repose. The seat should be useful, but nothing more; even the beauty of the rugged old tree, that spreads its broad umbrage on the turf beneath, should not for a moment have the attention called from its venerable form by the interference of art.

The hut, or covered seat, as more an object in itself, may with propriety occupy the sheltered corner of some grove or thicket; where it may form a pleasing feature in the landscape, and, at the same time, a retreat from the vicissitudes of heat or wet.

“ The

“ The cover'd seat, that shelters from the storm,
 May oft' a feature in the landscape form ;
 Whether, compos'd of native stumps and roots,
 It spreads the creeper's rich fantastic shoots ;
 Or rais'd with stones, irregularly pil'd,
 It seems some cavern desolate and wild.
 But still of dress and ornament beware,
 And hide each formal trace of art with care ;
 Let clustering ivy o'er its sides be spread,
 And moss and weeds grow scatter'd o'er its head.”

Knight's Landscape.

For the shed, or hovel, little instruction is necessary ; suffice it to say, that it should be in character with the rest ; yet nothing should be slovenly ; at the same time, too much care and trimness of appearance should be equally avoided ; and though, by its situation, it may be intended as ornamental, let it appear what it really is, an object of utility.

The walls may be composed of various materials ; bats made of clay and cut straw, roots, stone, stud-work with lath and plaster, rough-cast, and thatched with reed, straw, or rushes.

With regard to the grounds near the house, neatness should be attended to ; or, to

usc

use other words, a rather more dressed appearance may be allowed; here, both shrubs and flowers may lend their assistance, and blend themselves with the garden and orchard; all of which may be united to the lawn, perhaps better, by a simple rail left of its natural colour (which, I think, is to be preferred), or painted of an obscure green, than by any other means. At all events, there must be some kind of fence; it is advisable, therefore, to chuse that which is most in character, and least offensive. The common hedge-fence is clumsy and slovenly; it may be suitable to the inferior cottage; but in the ornamented one can scarcely be admitted, particularly in front. The ha! ha! partakes too much of art for cottage scenery, and does not unite with the character of the design. The rail, on the contrary, which in many situations is obtrusive, in this, I think, rather assists than offends in character.

The rail-fence, in uneven ground, or among trees and shrubs, sometimes concealed, at other times disclosed, as the wood recedes, or the ground rises, is a source of picturesque effect that is generally pleasing. Even in the
extended

extended scenery of the park, where the great object is to conceal the boundary, the old paling (as a back ground to the stems of the trees) covered with moss, and, as it sometimes is, strongly touched with the rays of an evening sun, is, nevertheless, an object that pleases as much in nature as in a picture.

As a boundary fence where concealment is required, nothing seems to be so applicable to the purpose, as the kind of fence suggested by Mr. Price, where trees, yews, thorns, and hollies are combined. The irregular form of such an outline, the extreme thickness of the fence, and the varied hues which it presents, together with the little space that it occupies, certainly gives it the superiority over the best designed fence that can be imagined.

Upon the lawn may be admitted horses, cows, and sheep; for these tend greatly to enhance the picturesque character of the scene, by imparting life and motion; and, as Mr. Repton justly observes, they assist the perspective in the highest degree.

Their

Their forms, either singly or in groups, are ever varying; and their different degrees of fore-shortening, whether in motion, standing still, or in a state of recumbency, make their situations as various as pleasing.

A well-disposed group of cattle under the shade of a rough and venerable tree, or, what is still more happy, enjoying the refreshing coolness of some glassy pool, that spreads its transparent surface beneath the shelter of a darkened copse, is among the most beautiful scenes of animated nature, and one of the sweetest accompaniments of cottage scenery; forming objects well suited to the pencil of a Bercham.

“ Oft pleas’d we see, in some sequester’d glade,
The cattle seek the aged pollard’s shade;
Or, on the hillock’s swelling turf reclin’d,
Snuff the cool breeze, and catch the passing wind.
Oft too, when, shelter’d from the winter’s cold,
In graceful groups they crowd the litter’d fold,
Their varied forms, and blended colours gay,
Mild scenes of simple elegance display;
And with faint gleams of social comfort charm
The humble beauties of the lowly farm.”

Knight's Landscape.

G

From

From the cottage lawn the scythe should be excluded, unless the grass be suffered to grow for use ; the rolled and shaven lawn is out of place among the scenes of the ornamented cottage. On this subject little more remains to be said ; much must depend upon the genius of the place, and even more upon the taste of the proprietor : so much, indeed, does every thing depend upon the latter, that by his conduct the best situation may be spoiled, or the worst be rendered pleasing.

The improver who keeps the following lines in his mind will not, in all probability, deviate far from the path which he ought to pursue.

“ First follow nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same : .
Unerring nature ! still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang’d, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, the end, and test of art.”

POPE.

The next and last objects to be considered in this Essay are, gates and stiles, which may be various in their forms. Gates, with perpendicular lines, seem best adapted to cottage scenery,

scenery, and may wear something of a Gothic form. They may also be made, in their different parts, with the different implements of husbandry—forks, rakes, and scythes; the irregular forms of the harrow, the hurdle, or the lift, may also be combined with some of these.

The property of a gate should be lightness, let its form be what it may: the stile, on the contrary, requires firmness and stability; the posts, ledges, and footstool should be stout, and closely put together; and should not only be actually capable of sustaining any weight imposed on it, but seem to be so.

The stile should also be of the simplest form; complexity would only serve to render its ascent difficult, which, even in appearance, should be avoided. In point of colour, both gates and stiles should correspond with the other parts of the same design; the endeavour to preserve unity, even in the most trivial instances, cannot be too much commended.

The common gate, the stile, or the simple

simple seat beneath the tree, are objects of utility, seldom of ornament; of course, they should be kept in their proper places. The white gate is frequently a disgusting object; the harmony of the most beautiful field may be spoiled by its intrusion; it is continually striving for pre-eminence, and attracts the eye in spite of itself.

An iron gate in cottage scenery, be its form or colour what it may, is still more absurd; but, whatever may be said of its impropriety, we not unfrequently see small iron gates painted of a deep lead colour, supported by white posts; and, as if not in themselves sufficiently ridiculous, stuck in every possible situation where a gate can be placed; if it happen to be against a rising ground, perhaps, to crown the whole, we have a flight of brick steps. In humble scenes, the iron gate is every way offensive; even the sound in its falling-to, is shrill, harsh, and dissonant, and disturbs the tranquillity of the scene. The shutting of a gate, in the stillness of evening, is a sound that creates an interest. The expected return of a friend, the solitary peasant retiring from his labour,

its

its echoes among the woods ; each of these affords a theme of reflection ; even the sound itself is pleasing, either mingled with other sounds, or breaking for a moment the silence that reigns around.

It may be worth while to inquire, how far inscriptions are applicable to the scenes of the ornamented cottage. If, as sometimes is the case, there be a small farm attached to it, I think, employed with great caution, they may have their effect ; but, unless there be a certain degree of space, all superfluous things appear affected. Shenstone, we know, at the Leasowes, and many others, have availed themselves of them with advantage ; but so much does the effect of any thing depend upon the application of it, that it may almost truly be said to be all and all. To the retired seat then, or moss-grown hermitage ; or, perhaps, in some instances, even to the cottage itself, I should not hesitate to affix an inscription, provided there were any particular circumstance in the scenery, &c. to call it forth.

The retrospect of past events, the death of a friend, the uncertainty of life, and the pleasures of rural retirement, are all themes that have been the constant and elegant sources of such effusions.

ESSAY III.

AH ! happy is the man whose early lot
Hath made him master of a furnish'd cot ;
Who trains the vine that round his window grows,
And after setting sun his garden hoes ;
Whose wattled pales his own enclosure shield,
Who toils not daily in another's field !

Poems describing certain Views of Nature.

ESSAY III.

AMONG the improvements of a gentleman's estate, I think, there can be none more grateful to the feelings of the owner, than an attention to the habitations of the labouring poor residing upon it. Few things, however, are less attended to, if one may form a judgment from their general appearance, than such cottages; which are, for the most part, sordid and miserable to the last degree, equally injurious to the health and morals of the inhabitants, and not less so to the ideas that we are led to form of the humanity of the man, who, while living in all the luxury and ease that a splendid habitation and a well-furnished table afford, can calmly pass the squallid dwelling of his lowly tenant, and not feel himself inclined to repair a monument that reflects such indelible disgrace upon his philanthropy.

Where

Where the inclination to perform a good action is wanting, arguments, such as they are, will always be readily found to answer the purpose : those made use of in defence of this neglect are, the ingratitude with which acts of kindness are too frequently repaid, and the natural tendency to filth and sloth which prevails among the lower classes of the people.

Without endeavouring here to determine how far truth does really exist in these arguments, I beg leave to ask, with respect to the first position, what gratitude is due to a man who exacts an exorbitant rent for a hovel, that frequently will not defend its inhabitants from the inclemency of the seasons ? And, secondly, as to cleanliness ; how is it in the power of a family, consisting perhaps of from eight to ten, or a dozen persons, crammed into a wretched hovel, seldom comprising more than two, and sometimes only one apartment, to be otherwise than dirty ? They have not the opportunity to be clean ; and, this allowed, is it to be wondered at that filth becomes habitual ? Of this melancholy truth there needs no proof to those whose business,

or

or charitable inclinations, lead them frequently into the habitations of the poor. Let not the man of large fortune suffer the spectre Ingratitude to haunt his imagination, and prevent a trial. Let him, overflowing with the milk of human kindness, hope to meet a suitable return ; yet, if disappointed, consider that ingratitude is a vice, not wholly confined to the poor.

After mature reflection upon this subject, I am inclined to think, that the general condition of the labouring poor might be materially bettered ; and that the landlord, independent of the satisfaction which must ever arise from conferring happiness on others, would ultimately be a gainer.

But it is not a comfortable habitation alone that can produce this beneficial consequence. While the whole of the land is engrossed by the farmer, little is to be expected. With the exception of a few instances, the cottager pays to the full amount for every thing that he purchases from that quarter ; therefore, unless placed in a certain degree beyond the farmer's power, yet without

out making him independent, all exertion to improve his situation, and, as far as is connected with it, that of the community, will be ineffectual.

In the disposal of farms, it is certainly in the land-owner's power to reserve any proportion that he pleases, which might be allotted to cottages; we will say, for instance, four acres to each; less would scarcely be sufficient for the proper maintenance of a *cow* or *two*, that grand source of happiness and real comfort to the poor man's family. Instead of which, both land and cottages are let to the farmer, who becomes responsible for the whole, without any further trouble or interest to the landlord, and who knows too well the sweets arising from its produce to part with it again on any terms. Even the cottager's garden has not unfrequently fallen a sacrifice to his rapacity: this is by no means an uncommon case, and calls for serious consideration. The peasant may indeed well exclaim,

“ Whence comes this change, ungracious, irksome,
cold ?

Whence the new grandeur that mine eyes behold ?

The

The wid'ning distance which I daily see ?
 Has Wealth done this ? Then Wealth's a foe to me ;
 Foe to our rights ; that leaves a powerful few
 The paths of emulation to pursue :
 For emulation stoops to us no more ;
 The hope of humble industry is o'er ;
 The blameless hope, the cheering sweet presage
 Of future comforts for declining age.
 Can my sons share from this paternal hand
 The profits with the labours of the land ?
 No ; tho' indulgent Heav'n its blessing deigns,
 Where's the small farm, to suit my scanty means ?
 Content, the poet sings, with us resides,
 In lonely cots like mine the damsel hides ;
 And will he then in raptur'd visions tell
 That sweet Content with Want can ever dwell ?
 A barley loaf, 'tis true, my table crowns,
 That, fast diminishing in lusty rounds,
 Stops Nature's cravings ; yet her sighs will flow
 From knowing this ;—that once it was not so."

Bloomfield's Farmer's Boy.

The advantages of a cow or two, under
 the before-mentioned circumstances, are real
 blessings : health, comfort, cleanliness, and,
 above all, the ability to act honestly, by be-
 ing placed in some measure out of the reach
 of temptation, urged by actual necessity,
 may certainly be classed among the foremost
 of

of those blessings, which it is in the power of every man of fortune to bestow *.

Such resources would not only enable the poor tenant to pay his rent, and ease his mind of that heavy burden ; but at the same time stimulate him and his family to industry, by giving him an idea that he held some rank in society, and that he was not created merely for the felicity of others.

My

* “ Small detached farms, adapted to useful and laborious life, unmixed with the splendours of opulence, but supporters of national wealth, are indeed objects of interest in every point of view ; they want not the adventitious and picturesque effect to attract peculiar notice ; to a benevolent mind, they are more than objects of beauty ; they are blessings to society ; nor is it incompatible with the pursuit of pleasure, sometimes to leave the boundaries of the park, and watch the exertions of laudable industry, or visit the cottages

“ Where cheerful tenants bless their yearly toil.”

The monopolist only can contemplate with delight his hundred acres of wheat in a single enclosure ; such expanded avarice may *enrich* the man, but will impoverish and distress, and (I had almost added) will ultimately *starve mankind*.”

Mr. Repton on Landscape Gardening.

My profession, daily leading me into the habitations of the poor, has occasioned me to regard their situations with accuracy, and to observe the difference arising between them from favourable or adverse circumstances ; and hence I can speak with some confidence upon the subject.

In one particular village which has fallen under my notice, where the cottages are remarkably comfortable, and where most of the tenants have the advantage of an orchard, there is very little poverty ; and I have invariably found, that where the greatest degree of poverty did prevail, this accommodation was denied. Among the many instances of comfort which were to be found in this village, I shall relate one of a poor man, who brought up a very large family (I believe ten children), and was enabled to pay a yearly rent of eight pounds for his cottage and orchard ; from the produce of which, and the cow that it enabled him to keep, he alone derived the comforts that he enjoyed beyond the produce of his labour.

Whatever is an incitement to industry is
also

also a stimulus to cleanliness ; and few things teach the latter virtue in greater perfection, than the management of a dairy. It also affords constant employment to the younger branches of a family ; and is of infinite use, by giving them early habits of industry, which is the surest guide to virtue and happiness.

Infancy passed in sloth and filth will, most probably, end in poverty and immorality ; against which nothing can be so effectual a guard, as the early period of life being actively and properly employed.

We are apt to deprecate idleness, without giving a sufficient degree of encouragement to industry ; and, indeed, it too often happens, that the idle and the clamorous, generally combined, are attended to, while the quiet and industrious person too frequently goes unregarded :

“ ————— Choosing, rather far,
A dry but independent crust, hard earn'd
And eaten with a sigh, than to endure
The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs
Of knaves in office, partial in the work
Of distribution ; liberal of their aid

To

To clam'rous importunity in rags ;
 But oft'times deaf to suppliants who would blush
 To wear a tatter'd garb however coarse,
 Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth :
 These ask with painful shyness, and, refus'd
 Because deserving, silently retire."

COWPER.

If small portions of land were more generally allotted to the cottages of the poor, I am persuaded that the most beneficial consequences would be extended far and wide. It would then be the labourer's own fault, if, with such advantages, (unless illness, or any great misfortune befel him) he did not provide comfortably for his family by the fruits of his labour; and I have not a doubt, but that a considerable reduction in the poors' rates would be the consequence of a plan of this nature. Magistrates would not then be so frequently troubled with complaints; or, if they were, they would not have the same reason for attending to them.

In order to the forming some idea of the utility of this plan, I beg leave to submit the following calculation; which, though only

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a general idea, is perhaps not far from the truth. I will suppose the labourer to pay, for four acres of land, the annual rent of six pounds; for his cottage forty shillings; and the necessary expenses of tillage, &c. without including his own labour, to amount to forty shillings more: this would make his outgoings amount to ten pounds. I will now suppose the produce of this land, with the assistance of a couple of cows, pigs, &c. to amount to thirty pounds, from which is to be deducted the above ten pounds for rent and expenses; leaving a balance in favour of the tenant of no less a sum than twenty pounds, or eight shillings a week; equal at least to the value of two-thirds of his daily labour.

After these remarks were written, Mr. Kent's Agricultural Report of Kent fell into my hands. Never having made rural œconomics my study, farther than as they relate to buildings, woods, and grounds in a picturesque point of view, combined with a sincere wish to see happiness as well as beauty equally diffused around, I could not but be highly gratified

gratified in finding arguments deduced, with so much good sense, from experience so exactly corresponding with my own.

“ The poors’ rates have increased in this county in a full proportion to others ; and, with a view of stopping this increase, several houses of industry have been established ; but they are grievous things in the eyes of the poor, and, I am afraid, are not found to answer the end that was expected from them. I know of no law that can enforce industry ; it may be encouraged, and great good will result from it ; but it can never be effected by compulsion.

“ There are two principles which should be kept alive, as much as possible, in the minds of the poor ; pride and shame. The former will lead them to the attainment of comfort by honest means ; and the latter will keep them from becoming burthensome to their neighbours. But many of the modern plans for making provisions for them have tended to destroy these principles.

“ A man born to no inheritance, who

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assiduously

assiduously devotes his whole life to labour, when nature declines, has as great a claim upon the neighbourhood where the labours of his youth have been devoted, as the worn-out soldier or sailor has to Chelsea or Greenwich; and this reward ought to be as honourable as it is comfortable; and not to be administered in a way that is repugnant to the natural love of rational freedom, which every human mind sympathizes in the enjoyment of. Such a man as I have characterized ought to be distinguished from the lazy and profligate wretch who has seldom worked but by force. The one ought not to be crowded into the same habitation with the other: but in houses of industry there can be no distinction.

“ There is one thing which is incumbent on all great farmers to do; and that is, to provide comfortable cottages for two or three of their most industrious labourers, and to lay two or three acres of grass land to each, to enable such labourers to keep a cow and a pig. Such a man is always a faithful servant to the farmer who employs him; he has a stake in the common interest of the country, and is never prompt to riot in time
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of sedition, like the man who has nothing to lose ; on the contrary, he is a strong link in the chain of national security.

“ There are but few great farmers, however, who are inclined to accommodate cottagers with these little portions of land ; and when they do let them any, it is generally at double the rent they give for it. But I am persuaded, that if there were a certain number of cottages, of this description, in proportion to the size of the estates, and they were accommodated in this manner, and those places were bestowed as a reward to labourers of particular good conduct, it would do wonders toward the reduction of the rates, and the preservation of order ; for I have been witness to several striking proofs of this, in two or three labourers who have been thus favoured, whose attachment to their masters was exemplary, as they were not only steady in themselves, but by their example kept others from running into excess. There cannot well be too many of these places attached to large farms ; they would be the most prolific cradles of the best sort of population.”

Mr. Kent seems to be truly sensible of the principle, that self is the first object, not only with the farmer, but with mankind in general. The comforts of the cottage ought not, however, to be left at the disposal of the farmer. If the land-owner, as is often the case, happen to be a gentleman with a liberal mind, he is the most likely person, not only to see the propriety of such a plan, but to carry it into execution with effect.

The cottage system, I am persuaded, need only be carried to its extent to render England indeed a paradise. Its influence would not be confined to the tenants themselves, or to the country. Large and populous towns would soon be sensible of the advantages resulting from it. The overplus (for an overplus there would ever be, and that no inconsiderable one) would tend to supply the neighbourhood, if not the public markets; and even if it did neither, the cottages would have a supply within themselves, and not, as they do now, add with the rest, in times of dearth, to the public scarcity.

I am convinced that the scheme is not
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a visionary one ; and the man of fortune who would put it in execution, and promote it with his full interest, would be more than entitled to the praise which Virgil bestowed upon Augustus for the restoration of his farm :

“ O Melibœe, deus nobis hæc otia fecit.
 Namque erit ille mihi semper deus : illius aram
 Sæpe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.
 Ille meas errare boves, ut cernis, et ipsum
 Ludere, quæ vellem, calamo permisit agresti.”

VIRGIL. ECL.

Charity is never so well bestowed, as when it tends to promote industry ; and if the reasoning that has been made use of is founded in truth *, the neglect is the more unpardonable, as it may be dispensed with-

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* For instances in proof of these arguments, the reader is referred to the Reports of the “ Society for bettering the Condition of the Poor ;” where, amongst a great variety of plans adopted (and which do equal credit both to the heads and hearts of the different members of so excellent an institution) the papers under the following numbers, 8, 14, 17, 53, and 83, will, I trust, be found not only particularly applicable to the arguments of this Essay, but highly interesting in themselves, and honourable to the promoters of the plans which they contain.

out being felt by the bestower. The entire gift of a cow would be of far less advantage, than the letting of land, even at the highest rent; it would, in my opinion, with no other advantage than the ordinary feed of cottager's cows, be rather injurious than beneficial. Those commons which still remain unclosed (and in a short time, I fear, there will be but few even of them) are in general so overstocked, that they afford little more than stowage; and to purchase feed of the farmer (for I have known the enormous sum of seven shillings a week paid for the winter feed of one cow) is more than the labourer can afford; the deficiency must therefore be made up in some way or other; too frequently, I fear, at the expense of some more wealthy neighbour; or, if this be not the case, the poor animal lingers through the winter with barely sufficient to keep her in existence; of course, produces no profit; and not unfrequently, from the same cause, is reduced to such extreme weakness, as to be lost in bringing forth her young. For the truth of this we need but appeal to the number of briefs and petitions that are put into our hands: within a fortnight in the present year, 1800,

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I have seen no fewer than five different ones, all for the loss of cows from the above cause ; and that the loss was sustained in almost every one of these instances, if not in all, for want of the animal's having a sufficient supply of food, I have not the smallest doubt : how, indeed, should it be otherwise, when turnips sold as high as seven or eight guineas per acre, and hay and straw were proportionably dear ?

We cannot much wonder, therefore, that depredations on a neighbourhood are committed, when we consider the scarcity and exorbitant price of every necessary article of life ; and which must be the case so long as the great farmer is allowed to monopolize every acre ; a few of which, distributed in small parcels, would not only encourage honesty by doing away necessity, but confer plenty, and of course happiness, on thousands.

The care also that must be exercised in small parcels of land, renders them proportionally more productive than larger tracts, where a little mismanagement is not so easily felt,

felt, nor of such injurious consequence to the larger occupier ; and where losses are more likely to ensue from the business being left too much to the care, and consequently to the carelessness, of servants.

If the cottager were permitted to occupy a sufficient quantity of land to maintain a cow or two, the common complaint used by farmers, of their employing dishonest means to support themselves, would, I think, be effectually done away. Only set aside such abject poverty, and from honest minds the depravity complained of will vanish : where, indeed, dishonesty arises from principle, or long habit, whether in rich or poor, you may try to eradicate it, but, I fear, in vain.

In a picturesque view, there is no part of an estate wherein taste may be displayed at a more inconsiderable expense, and with greater effect, than in the management of its cottages. Each being varied in its situation from another, by attending to circumstances, and observing a certain degree of variation in the structure of the buildings, the whole are made to produce a new and pleasing picture ;
pleasing

pleasing in every point of view, whether we consider them as the peaceful dwellings of those who are indebted to the rich for the comforts they enjoy ; or as affording that variety of picturesque effect which no other scenery can produce in a superior degree ; particularly with those surrounding appendages, upon which we know that comfort so much depends.

The idea of plenty naturally attached to the sight of the cow, the pig, and the poultry ; the industrious attention of the housewife, with those of her family who are capable of assisting in domestic duties ; and the amusement which they afford to such as are too young to be usefully employed,—are all circumstances of the highest delight to a benevolent mind. There is also a peculiar pleasure in contemplating such animated scenes as we look for in vain from the most perfect landscape where that source is wanting. The contrast between animate and inanimate objects is as striking as it is pleasing. Herds, flocks, and human dwellings, fill up vacancies with the most agreeable forms and combinations, and assist in calling forth an
association

association of ideas tending greatly to heighten the beauty of the scene.

“ Home from his morning task the swain retreats ;
 His flock before him stepping to the fold :
 While the full-uddered mother lows around
 The cheerful cottage, then expecting food,
 The food of innocence, and health ! The daw,
 The rook and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks,
 That the calm village in their verdant arms,
 Sheltering, embrace, direct their lazy flight ;
 Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower’d
 All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.
 Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene ;
 And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
 The house-dog, with the vacant greyhound, lies
 Outstretch’d, and sleepy. In his slumbers, one
 Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
 O’er hill and dale ; till, waken’d by the wasp,
 They starting snap. Nor shall the muse disdain
 To let the little noisy summer-race
 Live in her lay, and flutter thro’ her song :
 Not mean, tho’ simple ; to the sun ally’d,
 From him they draw their animating fire.”

THOMSON.

So greatly does the beauty of a village depend upon the character of these humble dwellings, that we are led from this circumstance to form, in passing through it, the idea of its general character ; which investigation also reverts to the superior possessor, whose character

character we contemplate with that degree of pleasure or pain, which is excited by the appearance of comfort, or of misery, exhibited to our view.

Indeed, in every instance I could wish to see the following lines exemplified in the fullest extent :

“ From every chimney mounts the curling smoke,
Muddy and grey, of the new evening fire ;
On every window smokes the fam’ly supper,
Set out to cool by the attentive housewife,
While cheerful groups at every door conven’d
Bawl cross the narrow lane the parish news,
And oft the bursting laugh disturbs the air.”

Poems describing certain Views of Nature.

In the management of the peasant’s cottage, nothing but the greatest degree of simplicity* is required. If the adorned cottage will

* Simplicity may, I think, properly be defined in two different ways. First, that kind of simplicity which is allied to grandeur ; to produce which requires magnitude with little ornament.

Secondly, That kind of simplicity which is more nearly allied to humility ; any thing that involuntarily, but unaffectedly, produces a pleasing effect : thus, we call

will bear so little decoration, even that little here would be absurd : all superfluous ornaments are out of the question ; they are not necessary to the existence, or to the comfort of the inhabitant ; and so far is unnecessary ornament from producing that happy character which is the very life and soul of cottage scenery, that it is almost the certain means of destroying it.

All those various circumstances which produce so pleasing an effect, as well in nature as in painting, arise from sources generally
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call a pretty but unaffected woman, plainly dressed, with perhaps a pale pink ribband so placed about her head-dress as to impart its glow to her features, a simply elegant object. The snow-drop and the primrose are also what may justly be called simple objects : but to every simple object, whether small or large, modest tender colours seem to be essentials. Two buildings, for instance, both of a like simple form, the one of a beautiful stone-colour, and the other of a glaring red, notwithstanding the similitude of its design or structure, will be widely different in their effects ; the former will obtain a character of simplicity, and probably acquire something of elegance, perhaps even of beauty ; while the latter will possess neither the one nor the other.

the very reverse of ornamental. Those innumerable tints and stains, those incrustations and enrichments, produced by the hand of time; those abruptnesses, such as the flaking off of plaster, the partial exposure of a stud, or piece of timber, or the chipping of a buttress, have their full effect in giving those spirited touches, which ornament can never reach; all of which may take place without running to such an excess, as to display wretchedness or produce inconvenience.

That the laudable pains and benevolent expense attending the improvements of cottages may not be frustrated by a dirty or worthless tenant, no one should be permitted to enjoy the advantages arising from them, who did not conform to established rules, particularly in the articles of cleanliness and industry. They might be made the rewards of faithful servitude; the *douceur* of a laudable ambition of keeping a family from a parish; or bestowed for any other quality that might be esteemed worthy of such a consideration.

Were such conditions as the foregoing
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to be those on which only such advantages could be enjoyed, I have no doubt but they would be the means of reforming many a family from filth, wretchedness, and rags, and turning their thoughts to decency and comfort. The conditions, at least, are easy; and a good habitation, with a piece of land, must be allowed to be powerful incentives, and such as few, except the most abandoned, could resist.

To the thoughtful and well-disposed, the comfortable prospect which a situation of this nature holds out to the time when age and infirmities shall have enfeebled the powers of industry, is not among the least of its happy circumstances.

Gesner's description of a virtuous old peasant past the powers of labour is so truly pleasing, that I trust an apology for inserting it is unnecessary :

“ Menalcas was old. Fourscore years had already bowed his head. The silver hairs shadowed his forehead, and a snowy beard flowed over his breast. A staff secured
his

his tottering steps. As he who, after the labours of a fair summer's day, in the cool evening sits down content, and thanks the gods, waiting for peaceful slumbers; so Menalcas consecrated the remainder of his days to repose, and to the worship of the gods; for he had passed his life in labour and beneficence, and therefore, tranquil and resigned, he waited for the slumbers of the grave.

“ Menalcas saw blessings diffused among his children. He had given them numerous flocks, and fruitful pastures. Full of tender anxiety, they each one strove to cheer his latter days, and to repay the care that he had taken of their tender years. It is a duty that the gods never leave unrecompensed. Often seated at his cottage door, in the sun's gentle warmth, he surveyed his gardens cultivated with the greatest care; and, far distant off, the labours and the riches of the fields. With an affable and courteous air, he engaged the passengers to sit down by him; gladly he heard the news of neighbouring villages, and was pleased to learn of strangers the manners and customs of far distant countries.

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“ His children, and his childrens’ children, came playing about him, the most delightful ornaments of his age.”

Can a benevolent heart contemplate a more delightful picture than that of industrious age seated in the lap of ease? The countenance once flushed with all the animation of health and youth, not transformed by poverty nor soured by neglect, but settled into peaceful resignation, crowned with content, and beaming with thankfulness to his Creator, and complacency to every object that surrounds him.

Formerly this was no uncommon character among the English peasantry. Those things described which are seldom seen, are, I know, apt to be construed as visionary imaginations, fictions of the brain; but such a character as the above is no fiction, it exists even now, though unhappily but rarely met with.

Let us hope, however, that to our posterity the patriarch peasant will be not only an existing,

existing, but a striking and happy feature in English scenery.

Having entered thus far into the apparent good, as well as improvement in point of picturesque beauty, resulting from an attention to the habitations and the domestic œconomy of the poor, it becomes necessary to give some kind of general outline that may be proper to be adopted in this species of improvement.

A free circulation of air, and a dry situation, are as necessary to the preservation of the health, as a proper separation of the sexes is to the morals of a family.

Nothing is more obvious, than the injury likely to result to both sexes, from such promiscuous intercourse as must necessarily take place where a large family are crowded together into one or two small apartments.

I have myself not unfrequently seen, in my professional attendance on the sick, four, and sometimes five persons huddled together

in the same apartment, nay, even in the same miserable bed. Indeed, at the time of writing this, I have daily occasion to attend on two families, whose cases are exactly in point. One particularly, where a man, his wife and three children, live and lodge in a hovel (house I cannot call it), the dimensions of which do not exceed seven feet by twelve: this only room is applied to their every purpose of life; the bed's foot reaches within twelve inches of the fire; and the only side where a passage is admitted between it and the wall, has no better floor than the pavement of the street. The apartment occupied by the other family, though of larger dimensions, has no floor at all.—These are by no means exaggerated accounts of a subject, on which humanity revolts at the reflection.

Unless, therefore, under the particular circumstance of a family's being so small as to consist only of one or two persons, no cottage ought to have less than four apartments, viz. the kitchen and two bed-rooms; with a fourth, which, by partitioning off, might serve as a wash-house, dairy, pantry, &c. All this
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is necessary for the smallest family above the number before-mentioned. But, as it is impossible to expect neatness where there is want of room, it would be more prudent to extend the scale ; in which case, the wash-house and dairy might be added as a lean-to, reserving for a bed-room the apartment which would otherwise be appropriated to those uses.

With regard to the materials to be employed in the construction of these buildings, the same principles are to be attended to as have been already laid down in the construction of the ornamented cottage ; keeping in mind, that the ornamented cottage is a degree above, while that of the peasant is at least one degree, perhaps two, in rank beneath, the farm-house.

The character of humility is easily attained, by attending to the height of the building. The glaring * colours of bricks and

* There is an idea of rural simplicity annexed to a thatched cottage, that is very much in favour of that covering ; and indeed the appearance of new thatch, both for neatness and colour, is remarkably

and tiles should be studiously avoided. The method of building cottages at Pisa, in Italy, (which

pleasing. It is no less picturesque when mossy, ragged, and sunk in amongst the rafters in decay ; a species of the picturesque, however, that has nothing to do with the improvement of houses and their roofs. But between the two periods of neatness and decay, particularly in the approach towards the latter, thatch has something of a damp dirty look ; and what would often induce me to prefer tile or slate, that dampness is increased, both in reality and appearance, by trees or climbing plants hanging or creeping over it : whereas any covering, of a hard material, may without injury be half concealed by either of them ; and it rarely happens that there is any thing in the look of a covering, that could make one regret its partial concealment.

Price on the Picturesque.

Thatch appears to me to have so decided a superiority over every other material as a covering for rural buildings, that I cannot help taking every method to promote its justly-acquired reputation.

From the moment it is laid on the building, it is in unison with the landscape ; but the mellowing tints of a few seasons give it an incomparable advantage as a picturesque object, without imparting an appearance of dampness or dirtiness, or rendering it less capable of resisting all the rigours of winter.

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(which is fully related in the first vol. of the
 “Communications to the Board of Agriculture”)

An object may appear in nature to be perfectly picturesque ; yet, if transferred to canvass in the exact state in which it appears, would fail in its pleasing effect. New thatch is an object of this kind ; its form, its colour, and the shadows occasioned by its bold projections from the building, are all of them better calculated to please the eye in rural architecture, than any other covering, and at the same time to blend harmoniously with the rest of the landscape ; but introduce the appearance of new thatch in a picture, unaided by that richness of tint, with those innumerable picturesque circumstances acquired by age, and, instead of pleasing, it will be a formal and insipid object.

Thatch, that through age has acquired so much of rottenness as to give a great idea of dampness, or that is verging towards the last stage of decay, however picturesque, conveys more misery than a feeling mind would be willing to believe fell to the lot of humanity : in such a state, it ought to be wholly confined to the representation of the landscape painter, who knows how to appreciate its value.

Considering thatch, therefore, as indispensable in rural architecture, I think, so far from reprobating a material whose picturesque beauty is augmented by age, it is one of its greatest recommendations ; and

ture") and much the same kind of thing which is practised in some parts of Ireland, and introduced into this country by the late Duke of Bedford, I should think well adapted both for cheapness and colour (if the work be capable of resisting the frost, as I understand it is, being worked dry) to all the purposes of the lower kinds of cottage architecture.

Those windows which are placed in the roof should be thatched over with the roof itself; and, as picturesque effect, as well as the

the time necessary to bring it to that state which would render it miserable or dirty, would, I trust, be found to make greater visible ravages in any other covering. Tile or slate, in my opinion, can never equal it in picturesque effect. Tile, particularly the red sort, is always out of harmony. Slate, with respect to its colour, is certainly more eligible; but, as it is a very expensive covering in the eastern part of the kingdom, and used only for houses of consequence, it is out of the question in such situations.

Having received the greatest instruction, as well as pleasure, from Mr. Price's truly ingenious works, I would only be thought willing, by this digression, to rescue a justly-esteemed material from any real or imaginary objection, which, raised by such high authority, might act to its prejudice.

the small height of the building, require that some of them should be placed in that situation, the casement to this kind of window should be made as large as possible. In order to moderate, as much as may be, the inconvenience of a slanting roof, the walls might be carried up a little higher than they usually are before the roof is set on.

With regard to uniformity in the situation of doors and windows, I think that too strict an adherence to that principle in cottage architecture ought to be avoided. The prevailing character of the cottage should be that of picturesqueness; of course, irregularity and sudden deviation accord better with it, than the symmetry of regular architecture*.

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* “ On the opposite side of the road was the parsonage-house, which exhibited a singular mixture of neatness and irregularity. Something seemed to have been added by each incumbent, just as a room, a staircase, or a passage, was wanting: there were all kinds of projections; of differently shaped windows and chimneys; of rooms in odd corners; of roofs crossing each other in different directions. This curious
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In a mansion, or any building of considerable magnitude, particularly after the Grecian model, we expect to see a correspondence of parts. In such buildings, the eye is disgusted with any thing wearing the appearance of irregularity : we survey it as a piece of architecture which is intended to command attention ; while in the cottage, whether ornamented or not, we look only for comfort and general effect ; which I think is altogether assisted, rather than injured, by studying to make the situations of particular parts of such buildings appear to be more the effects of convenience, than objects of solicitous attention.

In this reasoning, however, I know that I am opposed ; but it is not the mere architect
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old fabric was kept in the highest order ; part of it was rough-cast ; part only white-washed ; but the whole of a pleasing quiet colour : vines, roses, jasmines and honey-suckles, flourished against the walls, and hung over the old-fashioned porch ; a luxuriant Virginia creeper grew quite to the top of a massy stone chimney ; and shrubs and fruit trees were very happily disposed, so as in some measure to disguise and contrast the extreme irregularity of the building.

Price's Dialogue, p. 127.

by profession that is perhaps always capable of judging in this particular; for unless, joined to his profession as an architect, he has a knowledge of painting, he cannot reconcile such deviations to the principles of his art; it is a system that strays too much from symmetry and regularity (the standard that guides all his ideas) to be tolerated.

That a strict attention to principles should be the foundation of that knowledge which is to raise him into fame, is indisputable; but these principles should be in some measure laid aside when he condescends to give directions for a cottage or a shed; there all affectation should be avoided; blank windows in a cottage, for the sake of uniformity, would be as absurd, as the neglect of this principle would be in a palace. Moreover, in a house upon a small scale, convenience is to be studied in every instance; and if this is attended to (as it always should be) uniformity must sometimes give way.

I grant that the ornamented cottage admits of a greater degree of embellishment
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than the habitation of the hind ; but still, if it proceed to symmetrical affectation, the elegant negligence of the design is lost, and it is put upon a level with the formal upright, attempted by the country carpenter.

In designing a mansion, or a villa, the architect should bear in mind the models of Palladio, the temples of Greece, or the palaces of Rome ; but if the cottage partake of these, it is pedantic.

Although the ornamented cottage may be the residence of fashion or wealth,—where good taste centres in either, it will comply with the circumstances of the situation which it has chosen ; and, provided it affords the comforts of life, will not cavil, whether a door, a window, or a chimney, be in strict conformity to the architectural rules of symmetry ; neither will this be expected. Wealth and splendour retire to the cottage for the sake of variety, and to enjoy themselves within those contracted limits which cannot so well be complied with surrounded by the necessary establishment of a great house ; while
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the small but independant family seek it as the asylum of comfort, and the abode of tranquillity.

Besides the opinion of Mr. Price (in the note before quoted) in support of this part of my argument, I am happy in having the authority of Sir Joshua Reynolds; who, to the high rank which he held in his profession, added the most refined taste for all the polite arts. His mind, too expanded to admit of narrow prejudices, was regulated by the nicest investigation, and the soundest judgment. Whatever, therefore, is advanced on such a foundation, is not merely leaned upon; its stability is sufficient to bear whatever burthen you chuse to impose upon it.

In his thirteenth discourse at the Royal Academy he says, “ It may not be amiss for the architect to take advantage sometimes of that to which I am sure the painter ought always to have his eyes open, I mean the use of accidents; to follow when they lead, and to improve them, rather than always trust to a regular plan. It often happens, that additions have been made to houses, at various times,

times, for use or pleasure. As such buildings depart from regularity, they now and then acquire something of scenery by this accident, which I should think might not unsuccessfully be adopted by an architect, in an original plan, if it do not too much interfere with convenience.

“ Variety and intricacy is a beauty and excellence in every other of the arts which address the imagination; and why not in architecture ?

“ The forms and turnings of the streets of London, and other old towns, are produced by accident, without any original plan or design; but they are not always the less pleasant to a walker or spectator on that account; on the contrary, if the city had been built on the regular plan of Sir Christopher Wren, the effect might have been, as we know it is in some new parts of the town, rather unpleasant; the uniformity might have produced weariness, and a slight degree of disgust.”

In the ceilings both of upper and lower apartments, it has a very characteristic appearance

pearance to leave the spars and joists uncovered ; specimens of which may be seen in many cottages of old date. In this state also they are very useful ; nails, for the purpose of hanging various articles, find an easy reception, which might otherwise be injudiciously applied to the detriment of the cieling itself. The Spanish chesnut, by its durability in such situations, is superior to any other wood ; witness the roofs of many churches, and other buildings. It acquires also by age exactly that dark brown hue which is so particularly desirable in cottage architecture, and which fir, however good in quality, never assumes.

In the humblest cot there are innumerable little circumstances to which attention may be directed ; and which, though trifling in themselves, and almost equally so in regard to expense, tend greatly to heighten the picturesque appearance externally, as well as its character and comforts internally.

A warm and comfortable cottage, under every circumstance of seasons, is an object calculated to produce the most pleasant sensations.

sations. In spring and summer, the surrounding verdure, the little garden decorated with flowers and loaded with fruits, to which add cleanliness and cheerfulness, place it among the most interesting of rural scenes.

In autumn, when the first frosts begin to tinge the decaying foliage that surrounds it with all its rich variety of colouring; when, joined to the perfect stillness of a calm autumnal day, the misty atmosphere spreads its tender grey tint over the landscape;—then it is that the cottage enjoys its utmost harmony and repose, and wears its most picturesque attire.

In winter, though less picturesque, it is a no less pleasing object; when the fast-falling flakes have whitened its humble but impenetrable roof, and the snow-drifted peasant, shaking his garments, seeks the warm shelter of its cheerful hearth.

Domestic and other animals flocking round for shelter and for food, impart a degree of character truly winter's own.

“ The

“ The cattle from th’ untasted fields return,
 And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
 Or ruminatè in the contiguous shade ;
 Thither the household feathery people crowd,
 The crested cock, with all his female train,
 Pensive, and dripping ; while the cottage hind
 Hangs o’er th’ enlivening blaze, and taleful there
 Recounts his simple frolic : much he talks,
 And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
 Without, and rattles on his humble roof.”

THOMSON.

The picturesque character of a cottage, it has been before observed, is considerably increased by ivy, or other creeping plants, climbing about it ; but in the peasant’s cottage, beauty and emolument should go hand-in-hand, and be kept constantly in view : therefore, instead of the ivy or the honey-suckle, let the apricot, the pear, the plumb, or any other productive wall-fruit, be placed as a substitute ; the north aspect alone, as unfavourable to the ripening of fruit, may be reserved for ivy, the situation of all others most adapted to its nature. The vine is by far the most beautiful of all the wall-fruit trees, and, where it meets with a situation that it likes, is by no means unproductive.

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The

The generality of wall-fruit trees, when well trained, are pleasing objects. In winter, their slender branches make a beautiful appearance; as the summer advances, they also increase in beauty, alternately putting forth leaves, blossoms, and fruit. The cherry-tree in particular, when the smooth brown bark of the spray, the deep green of its leaves, and the glowing colour of its fruit are combined, ranks among the most pleasing and profitable of wall-fruit trees.

The peach and the nectarine, than which nothing can be more beautiful, require more management, and, being always more uncertain, are less advantageous.

Vines, ivy, or other creeping plants, when suffered to run over the roofs of houses, I do not myself think by any means ornamental. Plants of the deciduous kind, when divested of their leaves, have a naked, uncomfortable, and, indeed, a slovenly appearance: evergreens, it is true, are not liable to this objection; but, suffered to grow over the roofs of houses, they are liable to a worse,
that

that of being prejudicial to the roof itself, by keeping it in a state of continual moisture.

In great profusion also, plants of this kind are rather injurious in a picturesque light; giving to a house, or the tower of a church, the appearance of a heavy uniform bush.

The more elegant creeping plants suffered to twine about the door or windows, whose regularity they break with all their native wildness, have an effect so nearly allied in idea to the primitive simplicity of past ages, an effect (if I may be allowed the expression) so classical, that it always excites our admiration.

They may sometimes be allowed to aspire even to the chimney, where their delicate tendrils flaunting in the breeze are seen to advantage; but if carried further than this the very profusion destroys the effect, and produces a heaviness that is disagreeable.

This may not be an improper place for taking notice of another part of the œconomy of the cottage ; which, though it is not of equal consequence to the happiness of a family with those before-mentioned, is not without its uses, both in a profitable and moral point of view, independent of the ornament and apparent comfort that it bestows ; I mean the garden : every thing that it produces is found useful in a family ; and as an amusement, it holds a distinguished rank amongst all the classes of mankind. It does not require that the mind should be highly cultivated, to enjoy the pleasures of gardening ; the love of it is implanted in our minds with its earliest impressions. It is among the first of infantile amusements ; and almost every one must have observed the high enjoyment which it affords to individuals of the lowest class. It is a pleasure equally enjoyed by the females of a family ; who, generally, are not only fond of gardening to excess, but cultivate a small spot with equal care. Indeed, some of the neatest that I have seen, and those by no means unproductive, have
been

been cultivated by women far advanced in life.

But, admitting the profits arising from a small garden to be trivial, it has, perhaps, other advantages that are not to be despised. The time that is employed about it, is stolen from those intervals of labour, which, for want of such amusement, might be worse occupied. Every one has, or ought to have, his enjoyments; it is the duty of every man of fortune, as far as it is in his power, to endeavour to procure for his dependents enjoyments of the most innocent kind; and those certainly answer the best end, where utility and pleasure are combined. What with the care of his garden, his land, and his cow, every hour would be usefully, and of course happily, employed. Nor is the anticipation of the profits that are to be the reward of his toil, among the least of his pleasures: he naturally considers every thing that arises from such sources, as so much independent of his daily labour, and tending to procure for himself and family those little comforts which
are

are so naturally desired, and so justly his due.

Were these kinds of means more frequently adopted, indigence would find its own remedy ; and a man would not be forced to the degrading necessity of applying to a parish for that relief which his own industry would and ought to be sufficient to procure.

Such means would also furnish the most infallible remedy against the evil effects of public-houses, the resort of the idle and the vicious, and the natural consequence of the want of employment.

Whatever has a tendency to divert the attention from such scenes of idleness and dissipation, is productive of a more extended benefit than is perceived upon a transient view. Idleness and dissipation can scarcely fail of producing injury to the morals of their votaries ; a family, of course, suffers in all respects, in proportion to the shock which these have sustained in its superior.

I have

I have been frequently led to pity, more than to blame, the conduct of those whom the world esteem dissolute and abandoned : some are, no doubt, abandoned from principle ; but many more, I fear, are rendered so by their misfortunes. Is it to be wondered at, that men whose hearts are chilled by the icy gripe of poverty and distress ; whose houses, or rather huts, exhibit nought but wretchedness ; in short, who are to expect no comfort at their return from toil ;—is it to be wondered at, that, deprived as it were of every thing which should constitute happiness in their own family, they seek with eagerness the comfort of an alehouse fire, and any society or amusement capable of producing a momentary oblivion to their cares ?

Compared with this, how different must be his sensations, who at his return is greeted by his humble yet happy family ; whose brows, crowned with content, are brightened by the cheerful emanations of the evening fire ; and upon whose homely board is spread wholesome but frugal plenty !

“ Ye

————— “ Ye masters, then,
Be mindful of the rough laborious hand,
That sinks you soft in elegance and ease ;
Be mindful of those limbs in russet clad,
Whose toil to yours is warmth, and graceful pride ;
And oh ! be mindful of that sparing board,
Which covers yours with luxury profuse,
Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice.”

THOMSON

OF

OF THE PLATES.

IN the foregoing sheets I have made objections, on various grounds, to many buildings in the cottage style which I have seen; I have also recommended certain forms of lines and contour, as likely to produce a proper play of light and shade, and thereby obtain picturesque effects. It may therefore reasonably be expected, that I should in some degree realize my speculations and reasonings, by employing the *pencil* as well as the *pen*, the more clearly to demonstrate my ideas and opinions on this subject of rural beauty. To gratify these expectations, and to shew that I am not led away by a wild and capricious fancy, I annex six sketches of cottages, such as I think will produce effects pleasing and picturesque. As I do not profess to understand the practical parts of the builder's art, I have merely described a plan suitable to each design, by which it will ap-

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pear,

pear, that the conveniences produced are sufficient for the purposes of social, and even of elegant retirement.

EXPLANATIONS.

PLATE I.

Sketch for an ornamented Cottage; properly speaking, but one story high, the chambers being in the roof. The plan proposed is a vestibule, with a parlour on each side, and another room with a bow at the end, which may be appropriated to a library, or any other purpose. The accommodations of this cottage may be considerably enlarged, by carrying the vestibule backward, to serve as kitchen and offices, which, by breaking the regularity of the back part of the building, will add to its picturesque effect.

PLATE II.

In this Cottage, the plan may be similar to the former; but the elevation is totally different: the bow-window in the left-hand parlour is well adapted to receive coloured glass.

PLATE

PLATE III.

Design for an adorned Cottage, of a more regular form; from the centre part, which appears of the same size with the parlours, a passage or entrance to them may be taken off transversely, while the back part may be employed as a kitchen; and by carrying one of the wings backward, so as to throw the plan of the house into the form of an L, other conveniences, with an additional chamber, would be obtained.

PLATE IV.

Is an idea for a Cottage, upon a plan calculated either for the adorned cottage, or to be divided into two tenements for labourers. The thatched porch over the doors, is supported by the rough trunks of trees, round which different creeping plants may be suffered to twine at pleasure. If it were constructed on the larger plan as an adorned cottage, the entrance on the right may lead to the kitchen and offices, while that on the left would form a proper one to the other parts of the house.

PLATE

PLATE V.

I propose the plan of this sketch to be a square, containing a passage, which may also contain the stair-case, to have four rooms on the ground floor, with as many chambers over; the viranda may either entirely surround it, or be partially discontinued.

PLATE VI.

This sketch is of more humble appearance, and calculated to contain four rooms upon the ground-floor, with chambers in the roof. Clay formed into bats mixed with cut straw, built upon a brick under-pinning, would be a good method of construction. A cottage of this form, with its garden, vines, &c. is equally well placed by the side of the village common, in the recesses of a wood, or under the sheltering brow of some southern hill.

THE END.

Plate 2.



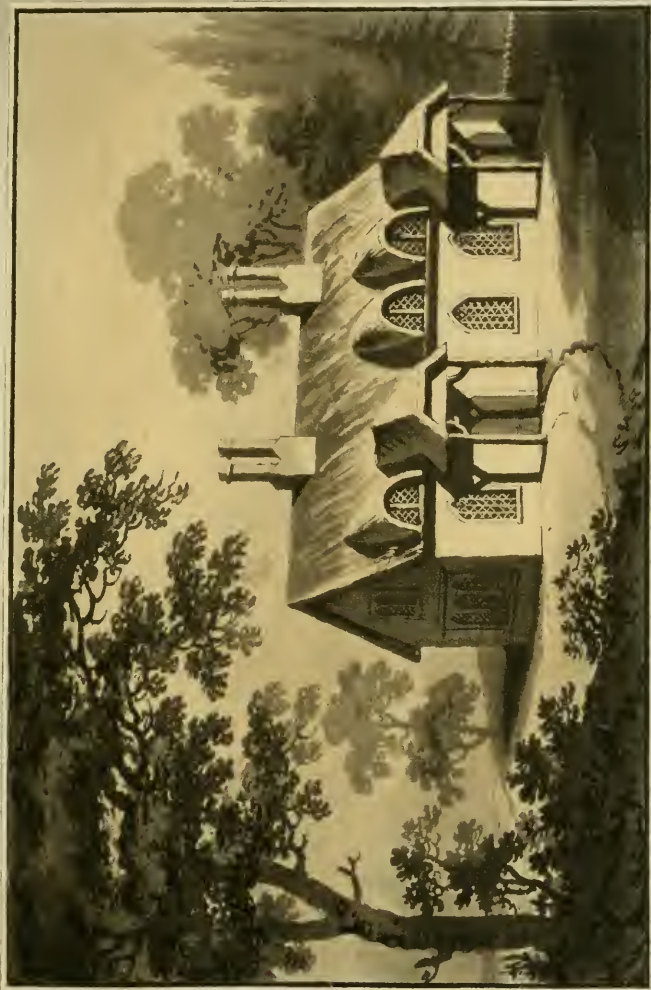
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